

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Akron's Library

Commemorating
Twenty-five Years on Main Street
by Margaret Neumann Dietz

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Published by
AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

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**COVER: A photograph of the Frank W. Steere, Jr.
Courtyard at the High Street entrance to Main
Library of the Akron-Summit County Public
Library.**

**AKRON'S LIBRARY: Commemorating Twenty-Five Years
on Main Street**

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AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
55 South Main Street Akron, Ohio 44326-0001
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Introduction

This book expands and updates two previous histories: *A Story of the Akron Public Library, 1834-1942* by Helen L. Pardee, and *Akron Public Library: A Century of Service 1874 - 1974* by Janis Joann Blair. As in the previous histories, this work documents the continuing growth and development of this remarkable library and records the loyalty and support of the community which gave it birth. Clearly, the development of the library reflects the value which the citizens of Akron and Summit County place on its existence. In my thirteen years as Librarian-Director, I have come to respect and depend upon this strong community commitment to the library. Without such unwavering support, a library of this magnitude could not continue to exist in Summit County.

This book has been a labor of love for Margaret Dietz, a former staff member of ASCPL and now President of the Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library. It was almost four years ago that she agreed to write a new history of the library to help celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Main Library on Main Street. The library was able to publish this book thanks to endowment funds left to the library by James W. Chamberlain. We are once again grateful for his generosity which has provided non-tax generated funds for this book.

We hope you will enjoy learning about the development of this library system, and the large part that citizens have played in its growth. We hope that we can count on your continued support as the library moves into the 21st Century.

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Akron's Library

Commemorating Twenty-five Years on Main Street

Chapter 1

How It All Began

Spring, 1994, marked the twenty-fifth anniversary at the present location of the Akron-Summit County Public Library at 55 South Main Street in the heart of Akron. Service began March 24, 1969, before the building was completely finished; formal dedication followed on April 27. But community recognition of a need for a library and the use of many locations other than the present one date back some 160 years.

Astride the Ohio-Erie Canal, the town of Akron perched on its high point. Some 1,343 Ohioans lived there in 1830. The bustling little village thrived with the completion in 1832 of the canal from Lake Erie in the north to the Ohio River far to the south. Not only commerce, but also a quest for education and culture, stirred the small community, for on February 21, 1834, by special act of the Ohio legislature, "The Akron Lyceum and Library Association Corporation" formed "for promotion of literary pursuits."

The corporation sold stock at \$25 a share; stockholders became members; the money raised bought books. Association members also donated volumes from their own collections and between purchase and gifts, "quite a respectable library of books" resulted, according to Samuel A. Lane, author of *Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County* (Akron Beacon Job Department, 1892).

These culturally inclined citizens who became members of the Association, all community leaders of their time, included Seth Iredell, first mayor of Akron, and Dr. Eliakim Crosby, an entrepreneurial physician, who diverted water from the Little Cuyahoga to a millrace named Cascade, thus providing water for the community's new industries. The Association met and probably kept its reading materials in a small frame school house on the northeast corner of Middlebury (now Buchtel) Avenue and Broadway. This building was later replaced by a one-story stone building, the Old Stone School, currently preserved by the Summit County Historical Society.

Discussions at Association meetings were "spirited (with) considerable tact and talent displayed, not only by the regularly appointed disputants but by others, while the essays and addresses by home talent were often able and instructive," according to Lane's history. By 1844, loss of membership through death, moves from the area, and new forms of entertainment reduced the group's membership, and the Akron Lyceum and Library Association disbanded. The Association auctioned off its books and prorated the proceeds among its members (Lane, *Ibid.*).

Meanwhile, the city's young businessmen in the winter of 1836-37 organized a literary and oratorical society titled the Akron Philo Lexion Society. The group which survived four or five years published what Samuel A. Lane called "a literary weekly periodical," entitled the *Akron Mirror*. It included spicy contributions from both males and females, which together with editorial comments were printed and read by the editor who was elected monthly. It is notable that this group welcomed women as contributors.

By 1840 Akron briefly became "the busiest internal port in the developing nation" according to Dr. George W. Knepper in *Akron: City at the Summit* (Tulsa, Oklahoma: Continental Heritage Press, 1981). That year the Ohio legislature created Summit County from townships in Portage, Medina, and Stark Counties, and Akron became the county seat. General Simon Perkins, land agent and speculator, soldier, early banker and promoter, donated land for a courthouse and jail built in 1843 (Lane, *Ibid.*).

The busy new county seat on the canal fostered other kinds of ferment as well. Reverend Isaac Jennings, a Congregational minister, worked for Ohio's first graded public school system. The Mechanics Association agitated for improved labor conditions including a ten-hour day and payment in cash. They also established a Mechanics Library and Reading Room in 1846 for "the benefit of the working classes," according to Helen L. Pardee, *A Story of the Akron Public Library, 1834-1942* (Akron Public Library, 1942).

Judge James R. Ford, Summit County Court of Common Pleas, and Simon Perkins each contributed \$50 to the mechanics' project. Other contributors provided 250 volumes of scientific works and periodicals. The reading room was open to members of the Association, their families, and contributors.

By 1847, Jennings' efforts bore fruit as the Akron School Law established an educational system in a form similar to that of today. Then in 1853 the State of Ohio adopted the Public School Library System, and the Akron High School, at Summit, Mill, and Prospect Streets, instituted a school library. Samuel Cooper, Superintendent of Schools and also librarian, followed the law and made all books available to every family in the district. The Mechanics Association promptly donated its collection to the high school library, housed between two stairways on the second floor.

By 1865, Akron's population had grown to 5,056, and culture-minded citizens established "The Akron Lecture Association." They provided a reading room and set up a series of popular lectures on such topics as women's rights, temperance, and abolition—though the Civil War had ended and the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery was adopted in December. Among those who spoke in the lecture series that winter of 1865 was William Lloyd Garrison, anti-slavery crusader and editor of the Abolitionist newspaper, *The Liberator*. Season tickets for the series of eleven lectures sold for \$5 for a couple; \$3 for a gentleman alone; \$2 for a lady alone. A single admission was fifty cents (Lane, *Ibid.*).

A very successful season of lectures led the members to incorporate the following March as "The Akron Library Association." They added a circulating library to their reading room located on the second floor of the W. G. Raymond block on the west side of Howard Street. Edwin P. Green, the Association's first librarian, supervised the collection and kept the rooms clean and ventilated

for \$5 a week; the library was open every day but Sunday.

Membership fees for the Association were first set at \$2 a year, and immediate subscribers included Julian H. Pitkin, Stephen H. Pitkin, David L. King, William H. Upson, Charles B. Bernard, James H. Peterson, Julius S. Lane, George W. Crouse and Samuel A. Lane. Subsequently, the membership fee was raised to \$3 a year, with life memberships priced at \$50. One hundred life memberships were sold. The Akron Library Association elected William H. Upson as its president.

Upson pursued a distinguished career as Summit County prosecuting attorney, state senator, representative to Congress from the 18th District, and judge of both the Ohio Supreme Court and the Circuit Court of Ohio. In Akron, Upson was the law partner of Sidney Edgerton. A national figure himself, Edgerton had served as governor of Montana Territory and as Chief Justice of Idaho. Along with his family, he returned to Akron in 1865. Subsequently, it was Edgerton's daughter, Mary Pauline, who heavily influenced Akron library history.

Within two years, the Akron Library Association's book collection numbered 2,500 volumes, and Theron A. Noble became Green's assistant librarian. The Portage Township Recruiting Committee contributed its surplus Soldiers' Bounty funds, left over from the Civil War, which amounted to \$3,211.26. This augmented the circulating library and provided extra funds for the continuing popular lecture courses, though the lectures usually were self-supporting. With all of this, readership multiplied; by 1870 the Howard Street space became inadequate.

The Association appointed a committee to seek better quarters. At the time two large new buildings were nearing completion in downtown Akron: one was the Academy of Music on East Market Street; the other was the Masonic Temple on the northeast corner of Howard and Mill Streets. After considerable debate, the board purchased a room from Captain Aaron P. Baldwin on the second floor of the Masonic Temple building. The Soldiers' Bounty funds were quickly diverted to defray most of the \$3,500 purchase price.

In her *A Story of the Akron Public Library, 1834 to 1942*, Pardee wrote that "a dimly lighted stairway led to the library from the street entrance. A coal stove furnished heat in winter. The books were placed in cabinets behind heavy glass doors. Railings barred the public from these cases, and rules forbade any except the Librarian, his assistants and members of the Board to open a case or take books from the shelves. Returned books were to be placed correctly upon the shelves before they might be drawn out again, and no book might be laid aside for a reader. It was no place for children, as no one under twelve years of age was permitted to draw books."

Also in 1870 the Universalist Convention decided to build a college in Akron. Horace Greeley, a Universalist and editor of the influential *New York Tribune* whose weekly mail editions reached subscribers in Akron, delivered the principal address when the cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1871. John R. Buchtel, another Universalist and self-made man with little formal schooling, contributed \$500,000 to the college which was then named for him. Students, evenly divided between men and women, began arriving in 1872.

On April 14, 1873, the Akron Library Association appointed Edwin P. Green, Sidney Edgerton, and John R. Buchtel as a committee to confer with a similar committee from Akron City Council which was composed of Milton W. Henry, William T. Allen, and City Solicitor Edward W.

Stuart, to consider establishing a free public library for Akron. This was possible because in 1869 the Ohio legislature gave cities the right to establish free reading rooms and libraries, and, most importantly, to maintain them by taxation.

Deliberations obviously went well, for on January 26, 1874, City Council passed an ordinance that provided a one-half mill levy to support a free public library for the city. The Akron Library Association promptly gave its books and property to the city along with a three-year lease for its rooms with the stipulations that existing debts be paid and that the library be maintained free to all citizens of Akron. In 1877 the lease was made perpetual, and the Akron Library Association disbanded. As specified in the city ordinance, the Library Board of Control held its first meeting February 27, 1874. Present were Buchtel, who was elected president, George Tod Ford, secretary-treasurer, and J. Park Alexander, Milton W. Henry, and Green. They named Noble the first librarian. Noble's ill health forced him to resign in 1875. Horton Wright succeeded him and Joseph A. Beebe followed in 1882. Beebe held the post until 1889.

The new Free Public Library opened March 1, 1874. In April the Board of Education turned over to the new entity the books in the high school library, including what remained of the Mechanics Library collection. The library board gave Akron's Scientific Club reading room space for its cases of fossils, relics and specimens of natural history. The board subsequently voted to spend \$600 for additional books, including \$100 for books in German so Akron's large German population could enjoy the library as well. The board also voted to allow those living outside the city limits to use the library for a \$3 fee paid in advance, provided such applicants received board approval.

By 1880, Akron's population had grown to 16,512, and the citizens enjoyed free postal delivery and telephone service. In 1886 City Council revised and codified the library ordinance. It specified a Board of Control of six members, elected by City Council, two each year, to serve for three years. Council planned to exercise restraint only over library expenditures. Tax millage provided \$2,023 in the year ending March 12, 1887; \$2,325 in the year ending March, 1888; \$2,500 in 1889; \$3,700 in 1890. Also in 1890, Akron's population jumped to 27,601. By 1891, the library held about 12,000 volumes.

When Beebe retired as Librarian in 1889, Mary Pauline Edgerton, Judge Edgerton's daughter, assumed the post. "Miss" Edgerton—no one called her anything else—had become an assistant in 1885 at age 27. Over forty years later, the *Akron Beacon Journal*, in an editorial dated August 25, 1931, credited this indomitable woman for "bringing the library to its full measure of service to the community. Akron has an excellent public library largely because of the pioneering work done in its behalf when Miss Pauline Edgerton was its chief administrative officer."

Dealing with difficult circumstances was nothing new for Edgerton. In 1863 she had traveled with her family in covered wagons from Omaha, Nebraska, to Bannock City, Idaho where her father, Sidney, was to serve political appointments in Idaho and Montana by designation of President Abraham Lincoln. Following Edgerton's successful completion of his commissions, the family returned, again by covered wagon, to Akron in 1865 to live at 62 South Walnut Street and later at 153 Edgerton Road.

As Librarian, Edgerton's daughter immediately faced the problem of a need for greater

space. In response, board members tripled the size of the library by leasing the second floor of the new Everett Building on the northeast corner of Main and Market Streets for ten years, with an option for another five, at \$1,200 a year. The new library boasted both gas and electric light with complete fire protection.

Although 400 people attended the dedication on June 8, 1898, complete with a program by the Tuesday Musical Club, actual occupancy of the new quarters was delayed for four months because the board could not agree on furniture. On October 15, “thirteen high school boys, four draymen, and the Librarian and her assistants labored from early morning until late in the evening” to shelve a collection which in seven years had grown to 19,000 volumes (Pardee, *Ibid.*). Even so the board continued to quarrel over lighting fixtures, floor coverings and other essentials, so the public couldn't be served until December. Edgerton hired Sara Nelson, a Pratt Institute Library School graduate, to classify the collection according to the Dewey Decimal system.

Edgerton no sooner was in the new and larger quarters when it appeared that even those were not expansive enough. By 1900 Akron's rapidly increasing population numbered 42,728, and library usage grew in proportion. Cheered on by Edgerton, John C. Frank, trustee and later president of the board, spent months negotiating with Andrew Carnegie the steel baron for funds to construct a new library. Carnegie, in his retirement, provided buildings and equipment for 1,679 public libraries in 1,412 communities across the United States as well as 108 academic library buildings. He required that localities provide both the site and maintenance for each, which meant, of course, providing a local tax base.

On December 12, 1901, Frank announced to fellow board members the gift from Carnegie of \$70,000 for a library building. In return, Akron would have to provide the land and furnish \$7,000 a year for the library's support. City Council speedily guaranteed the required funding. Frank O. Weary, Akron architect, won the design competition. The project became complicated when the board decided to build with stone instead of brick, escalating the construction cost. That meant Frank had to get another \$12,000 from Carnegie, and City Council had to provide an additional \$1,200 annually.

Site selection came more easily than finances. Fortunately, General Lucius V. Bierce, soldier, hero, lawyer, and political office holder, had given the city “Bierce Park,” land to be used for a public building on the northeast corner of High and East Market Streets. The Carnegie Library would stand there.

The new building had an iron frame with Ohio sandstone walls outside, Italian marble and Tiffany glass inside, and steam heat. In the end this magnificent building cost \$85,000 and had 21,000 volumes available to the 4,000 registered borrowers. Edgerton moved the collection on April 23, 1904, and held a formal dedication on August 1. The original Carnegie Library building would continue in the future to serve the citizens of Akron as home to the Akron Art Institute and later as the law offices of Roetzel and Andress, Co., LPA.

Edgerton continued with innovations. She developed reference and catalog departments and increased library work with children, though there was no children's department as such. She foresaw the need for branch libraries “to bring books to the people, into the homes, for after all, a

large portion of the world has yet to discover 'how blessed a companion is a book'" (*Politics and the Women of Summit County, Women's History Project of the Akron Area, 1992: Women's History Project of the Akron Area, Inc., 1992*).

Between 1910 and 1920 the population of Akron nearly tripled from 69,067 to 208,435, largely because of the rubber industry and World War I. Akron's rubber factories continually expanded and seemed always to need more workers to make more tires for increasing numbers of vehicles. It was said that finding a job in Akron was no problem; finding a place to sleep was almost impossible. This population explosion strained all city services and inevitably affected the library. Edgerton and later her successor, Maude Herndon, constantly complained of lack of space and inadequate service.

Within the library, Edgerton's encyclopedic knowledge proved invaluable in dealing with inquiries and reference questions. Her influence with city administrations assured the library of adequate funding in the early days, even if she did not always secure the levels of funding she regarded as necessary (*Politics and the Women of Summit County, Ibid.*). This remarkable woman retired at age 62 in 1920, at a salary of \$2,400. She died eleven years later at age 73 in Wrentham, Massachusetts. *The Akron Beacon Journal* of August 25, 1931 remarked in Miss Edgerton's obituary: "Carnegie gave Akron its library building, and Miss Pauline Edgerton gave Akron its library."

Before she took over as Librarian in 1920, Maude Herndon had been the library's first children's librarian. A \$2,000 gift from F. H. Mason brought children's books to the library in 1913. Since there was no children's department as such, books for young people were on designated shelves on the first floor. Herndon inaugurated a "story hour" with a stirring rendition for 200 children of John Ruskin's "King of the Golden River." Story hours were established; other successes followed.

Herndon oversaw a complete inventory of books in 1923. In 1924, after fifty years of service, the total circulation was 379,711 books borrowed by 32,849 readers. Three branches (see Branches) and fourteen school collections were begun, with a library staff of thirty-six. The library budget had risen to \$50,000 a year. But, like her predecessors, she always needed more staff and more books. Herndon was also an inveterate world traveler. Among her legacies to the library was the beautiful Bokhara prayer rug currently hanging in the McDowell Board Room at Main Library. Sudden illness forced her retirement early in 1927.

Succeeding Herndon in August, 1927, was Herbert S. Hirshberg, director of Toledo Public Library from 1914-1922, president of the Ohio Library Association from 1917-1918 and director of the Ohio State Library from 1922-1927. Hirshberg (1879-1955) had an illustrious career. He had worked for the United States Library of Congress before coming to Ohio, and upon leaving Akron in 1929 became Dean of Western Reserve University Library School and director of WRU Libraries in Cleveland (now Case Western Reserve University.) Hirshberg hired Harriet W. Leaf away from Cleveland's public library in 1928 to build on the children's program begun by Herndon. Leaf headed the Children's Department for thirty years. Space for children was cleared in the basement of the Carnegie building, allowing them their own entrance from High Street. The Akron Art

Institute, forerunner of today's Art Museum, occupied the remainder of the basement.

Leaf graduated from the Carnegie Library School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she studied with the Norwegian story-teller, Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen. Because she told stories everywhere - to children in the library, to community groups, and over radio stations - Leaf became known as "The Story Lady." She instructed student nurses in reading aloud and story-telling, served as merit badge examiner for Boy and Girl Scouts, and in 1938 began programs of reading aloud over radio stations WJW and WADC. Her weekly program, "Tip Top Tales" was aired on WAKR from 1940 to 1957. She also expanded summer reading programs for children.

As an active member of the American Library Association, she chaired the ALA's committee to select the best children's books for the Newbery and Caldecott Awards. Leaf disapproved of the Nancy Drew detective series, the Hardy Boys books, and *The Wizard of Oz*. Margot Y. Jackson (Mrs. James S.), bookmobile librarian, head of Ayres Branch, and later newspaper columnist, remembered Leaf's attitude in her column, "A look at our history." Many years later in the May 15, 1992 *Akron Beacon Journal*, Jackson wrote, "Since Leaf knew tin men and lions couldn't talk, she claimed *The Wizard of Oz* was trash. Literature was important to her, and she saw no literature in any of the Nancy Drew books or their siblings."

Leaf was also a firm believer in equality and participated in many early civil rights movements. She retired from Akron Public Library in 1957, but continued to read for the Society for the Blind. She also served on the board of the Ohio Canal Society. She died at 93 on July 7, 1986. Thanks to Mary Ness (Mrs. Harold), coordinator of Children's Services, the collection of children's books known as "Early and Rare" was in 1976 named the "Harriet W. Leaf Collection" to honor the woman who had done most of the collecting.

A year after Leaf came to the library, Hirshberg moved to Cleveland as Dean of the Western Reserve Library School, having headed the Akron Public Library for only two years. On September 1, 1929, Will H. Collins assumed the position of Librarian. Collins, a graduate of the University of Kansas in Lawrence, was educated at the University of Illinois, Urbana, and at New York State Library School as well.

Other changes directly affecting the library followed. On New Year's Eve, 1931, Gillum H. Doolittle resigned from the library board to become Akron City Law Director. The following May 31, 1932, C. Blake McDowell, Sr., took Doolittle's place. Also an attorney, McDowell provided continuous and devoted service to the library for the next forty-four years.

Since 1904, when the library moved into the Carnegie building, the population of Akron had risen dramatically to well over 250,000 people by 1940. The library had also created nine branch libraries (see Branches), many of them during the depression years of the 1930s, but even so the library badly needed more usable space than the Carnegie building provided. The library board wrestled with this problem, finally authorizing in 1942 the purchase of the *Akron Beacon Journal* building at Summit and East Market Streets. Purchase price was \$300,000, payable at \$12,000 a year amortized over a period of twenty-five years with no interest.

In ill health, Will Collins relinquished his powers as Librarian to board member Halley T. Waller who, with the substantial support of board president Donald M. Pfeiffer, supervised the

renovation of the newspaper plant. Remodeling costs amounted to \$100,000. Leaf saw to it that space was designated for children. For another \$1,947, Remington Rand processed 42,000 card catalog entries for the Reference Department, adding efficiency for library workers and patrons alike.

Federal Works Progress Administration Project employees indexed back files of the *Akron Beacon Journal* from 1841 to December 31, 1939. Years later in 1968, this index, stored in shoe boxes crammed with three by five slips of paper, some handwritten, some typed, all yellow and brittle, was microfilmed under a Library Services and Construction Act grant. Rosa Donley (who died before the project was completed) and Curtice G. Myers (Mrs. Park) received credit for this very useful reference resource.

The library moved into the renovated and three-times-larger newspaper building in January and early February, 1942, with service resumed on Valentine's Day. The actual dedication came on November 5, with open house - a "Know Your Library" program - the following week. Prisons, reform schools, Works Progress Administration libraries and the Edwin Shaw Sanatorium shared discarded volumes. Special exhibits offered the reader "Books Banned in Boston" while an assortment of classics and "just good reads" were labeled "A book you haven't read is a new book." Leaf added the program, "Broadcasting Books" to her repertoire over radio station WADC.

Of course, the Carnegie Corporation of New York had to approve the move. It did so, suggesting that a bronze tablet or other memorial indicate that the original free public library was made possible through a gift from Andrew Carnegie. Carefully preserved and stored in the sub-basement vault at today's Main Library is such a tablet.

With the onset of World War II, the heavy unemployment of the depression years ended. With Akron's rubber industry and other enterprises in full war production around the clock, there seemed to be less time for workers to read. Circulation of over a million volumes a year, characteristic of the 1930s, began to decline. Plagued by illness, Will Collins resigned in 1944. He died 35 years later in Boulder, Colorado.

Collins' successor, quiet, pipe-smoking R. Russell Munn, arrived in May, 1944, fresh from his work as assistant director of the Cleveland Public Library where he also served as director of adult education. There he had introduced a speaker's bureau and created an educational film library. Under his aegis, Cleveland Public Library became the first major public library in the nation to lend films on a large scale.

Munn began his work at Akron Public Library with characteristic deliberation. He organized the staff to survey the library and the community to determine future directions. As a result of this investigation, Munn established a Business and Labor Service to enlarge the library's role in the business community. He began a bookmobile service in 1946, with one of its first stops scheduled at the Ira Road Post Office in Bath. Service to hospital patients continued, the Science and Technology section was upgraded, a phonograph record lending collection created, as was a sixteen millimeter educational film collection that circulated through Group Services.

Organizing materials for all these new services fell to the people in technical processing. Among them was Panola Coulter who joined the Akron Public Library staff in 1934, retiring on

January 1, 1975, after forty years of service. She ended her career as first assistant in Technical Processes. With a bachelor's degree from The University of Akron and a master's degree in library science from Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Coulter had previous experience in cataloging at Western Reserve University and at East Lansing College of Agriculture. Her quiet capabilities kept behind-the-scenes work moving smoothly.

Frank W. Steere, Jr., who served on the library board for thirty years, vividly recalled his first board meeting. "I had just been appointed and was getting used to the roll call vote for each procedure. Russ presented a scholarship prospect for approval, and Blake McDowell, Sr., who liked to stir things up a bit voted no. The labor person also voted no leaving a tie unless I voted yes. I asked some questions, and I could see Russ puffing on his pipe, raising more and more smoke. I did vote yes, and the puffing stopped immediately."

Though born in 1903 in Harbour Grace, Newfoundland, Munn and his seven brothers and sisters grew up in Summerland, British Columbia. Their father raised apples. During World War I, at age 14, Munn made \$6 a day assembling apple boxes. His family never experienced a shortage of food, but they also never had any extra money. From his apple box earnings, however, Munn saved enough for a year at the University of British Columbia.

He often remarked that he was raised on apples and educated on oranges. After Munn's funds were exhausted at UBC, he migrated to California where he worked first as a foreman, then as a bookkeeper for an orange grove packing house in Covina. It took four years of saving before Munn could return to UBC and complete his studies. Upon graduation he drove, as a library assistant, Canada's first bookmobile for the Fraser Valley Public Library in Chilliwack.

Because of his strong interest in literature and libraries, Munn received a grant-in-aid from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. This enabled him to earn a degree in 1932 from the Columbia University School of Library Service. He then worked as a reference assistant at New York Public Library, becoming in 1935 community librarian in Norris, Tennessee.

When the United States established the Tennessee Valley Authority in Norris, bringing in workers from all over the nation, more and more adults sought educational material as well as entertainment from the library. Munn responded with adult education programs. He sent boxes of books on a regular basis to 900 workmen clearing 21,000 acres of forest for the Norris Dam. He wrote an article for the *Library Journal* in 1935 detailing his success with "Saw-filers and Bookboxes."

Because of his success in Norris, the government loaned Munn to a National Youth Administration Work Experience project in Quoddy Village, Maine. In 1939, Munn left Maine for the Cleveland Public Library where he became assistant to Charles Rush, Librarian. There, in 1940, Munn made a special study for the American Library Association to discover how libraries could aid in vocational training and in the defense effort, priority items at the time. Four years later, Munn accepted a salary of \$6,000 a year at the Akron Public Library. For the next twenty-three years, Munn kept a steady hand on both library affairs and a well-stoked pipe.

Chapter 2

Chronology of New Library Project

For over a decade, library service was directed and provided from the Summit Street Main Library. As the community grew, so did demands upon the library and its staff. The problem which had plagued librarians since the establishment of the Akron Library Association in 1866 — SPACE!—was again a problem.

Munn kept a personal written chronology from the time of the first official mention of a new library. As he was quick to point out, the “new” Main Library which observes a twenty-fifth birthday in 1994 was not born without appropriate pain nor was its gestation period limited to nine months. It took ten years, as Munn's diary of developing events showed.

The first official mention of the need for a new Main Library was made at the September 16, 1958 meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Akron Public Library. Munn, Chief Librarian, (the Librarian-Director designation would come later), called attention to plans for the development of a so-called cultural center in downtown Akron which included construction of a branch library. Munn pointed out that a branch was not the solution to the needs of the community and urged consideration of a new Main Library in the immediate area.

Frank W. Steere, Jr., long-time board member, had this to say about the discussion: “Russell Munn, the Librarian, stated quietly but firmly that the library should be on Main Street in the heart of the downtown area. This represented a revolutionary idea because the library was then located on a side street on the fringe of the downtown area. When it was pointed out that such a location would be very expensive and would entail costs that were beyond what would normally have been contemplated, Mr. Munn stated that the architecture should set an example for future Main Street buildings. The board was startled by this recommendation and questions were raised as to whether we could afford so ambitious a plan. His reply was that if our city could afford to have bars and adult movie theaters on Main Street downtown, it could certainly afford a beautiful library and all that a library should stand for in the community. To our small board, this was a very exciting and challenging vision. We decided to go to work to make it a reality.”

A draft of Munn's recommendations was presented at the December 16, 1958, meeting. The

draft was approved on January 20, 1959, and the Librarian was authorized to present his plan at a meeting of the Mayor's Advisory Commission which he did. On February 16, 1960, Munn again brought up the question of the need for a new main building. He was asked by board members to supply facts relating to recognized standards for library buildings. This was done at the March 15 meeting and a committee, composed of library trustees Frank W. Steere, Jr., chairman, C. Blake McDowell, Sr., and Walter E. deBruin, Sr. was appointed to study the matter. The committee reported on April 19 that they had conferred with Claude L. (Kelly) Bower, County Auditor, who advised the submission of a levy as quickly as possible. As a school district library, the matter was presented to the Akron Board of Education which requested that the library postpone its plans because there would be school levies on the November ballot. The library board acceded to this request.

During the rest of the year the committee and Munn continued to study the matter, holding conferences with Akron Mayor John Ballard, members of the Chamber of Commerce, and architects Joseph Tuchman and Gordon Canute. Discussions centered primarily on the Morgan Hardware-Loew's Theater site on Bowery Street.

On January 17, 1961, the board passed a "resolution of intent" to ask for a levy or a bond issue for \$2,500,000. After conferring with Superintendent of Schools Martin Essex and members of the Board of Education, the committee recommended on March 21 the passage of a "resolution of necessity" prepared by Harry Van Berg, city law director. This resolution declared the need for \$3,000,000 to be raised by a 20-year bond issue to be voted at the November election. At the April 18 meeting a committee composed of Frank W. Steere, Jr., C. Blake McDowell, Sr., Walter E. deBruin, Sr., board members; Lawrence W. Radabaugh, retired secretary-treasurer of Retail Clerks International Association, District Council 7; Norman P. Auburn, president of The University of Akron; Norman Malone, advertising executive; and Robert Crawford, owner of Crawford Printing Company, was appointed to plan the campaign. The slogan selected: "People who read succeed."

Crawford and Ralph Brown, advertising executive for Lawson's Milk Company, developed a flip chart used with slides for appearances before groups and on WAKR-TV. The presentation was made to members of the editorial staff of the *Akron Beacon Journal* on August 22 but unfortunately, (according to Munn) Ben Maidenburg, the editor, was not present. The newspaper's enthusiasm for the bond issue and the amount of space given by the paper was disappointing. Meanwhile Munn and the committee gave 104 talks, made 150 short appearances and distributed quantities of literature. The result of the balloting on November 7 was 37,857 for and 41,464 against. At its meeting on November 13, six days after the vote, the board agreed to re-submit the issue for the May primary and at the December meeting passed a new "resolution of necessity." The Board of Education promptly acted upon the request.

In February, 1962, the Akron Council of Parent-Teacher Associations called a supportive meeting of its unit representatives. The Friends of the Libraries of Akron and Summit County (the name was shortened to Friends of the Library in 1964) appointed Dorothy Schankler (Mrs. Samuel), local political activist, as "Coordinator of Volunteers." Her contribution to the successful drive was substantial.

Steere and William Worrell, Friends member, served as co-chairmen of the campaign committee. They persuaded Ralph Brown to gather a volunteer committee of advertising people to develop publicity. This committee, combined with a much better organized volunteer group under Schankler's direction, many neighborhood coffees, and a carefully planned advertising and news campaign, was successful. The vote on May 8 was favorable: for—24,084; against— 21,635. On June 8 the trustees authorized a proposal to Edward deBartolo, Youngstown developer, regarding the possibility of locating the new library on top of the Cascade parking deck where he had "air rights." This proposal never went anywhere.

During July, Munn visited Minneapolis, Seattle, Vancouver, Denver, and Kansas City, all cities in which new libraries had been built. In September he took the supervisory staff for visits to the libraries of Dayton and Cincinnati. Six architects were interviewed: Ernst Payer of Cleveland; Beiswinger, Hoch and Verbecke, Harold Cassidy, Keith Haag, and Tuchman & Canute, all of Akron; and Curtis & Davis of New York. The board decided at a special meeting on March 19, 1963 to retain Tuchman & Canute, provided that the company employ a design consultant of national reputation. Pietro Belluschi of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was later retained in this position. He came to Akron in January, 1964 to work with the architects on preliminary designs.

On April 13 the board asked S.D. Stanson, local realtor, to explore the possibilities for an appropriate downtown site, especially the area "south of the Palace Theater." Also at this meeting a formal resolution was passed, drafted by the law firm of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey, requesting the Board of Education to sell the bonds. On October 24 the board held a special meeting to decide on how to invest receipts from the bond issue. It was decided to purchase certificates of deposit from the First National and Firestone Banks. The net amount realized from the sale of the bonds was \$3,000,410.96.

On January 17, 1964, the board decided to purchase the present site between South Main Street and High Street. On February 10 a formal resolution was passed authorizing S.D. Stanson to negotiate for purchase of lots numbered 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23 on Main Street and 11, 12, 13 on High Street. Those which could not be negotiated for a reasonable figure were turned over to the City of Akron for appropriation proceedings (the exercise of the right of eminent domain to improve the downtown area's appearance). Steere reported on March 9 that the City Planning Commission had approved the Main Street site, provided that lot 17 on the corner of Mill and Main was included. This was agreed upon.

In May, appropriation proceedings were begun to acquire lots owned by Siff, Belenky, Lieberman and Doyle. Munn recommended applying for federal funds, made newly available through the Library Services and Construction Act. Munn, John Rebenack, (assistant librarian), and Canute presented the preliminary plans for the new library at a critique session of the building and equipment section of the Architecture for Public Libraries committee of the American Library Association which was meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. Their presentation was favorably received by the 300 or more librarians present.

On August 12, 1964, preliminary plans were presented by the architects, approved by the

library board, and released to the *Akron Beacon Journal* for publication. At this time, objections were raised by Julian Suso, Akron planning director, to plans for the driveway on the north side of the building. Since the plot plan was submitted when the Planning Commission approved the site in February, it had been assumed that there was no objection to the exit to Main Street. On October 12 the board approved a resolution suggested by the Planning Department which included a number of requirements, one of which prohibited the moving of traffic "across" Main Street. On receipt of this resolution, the Planning Commission approved the action which subsequently was passed as an ordinance by City Council on November 3.

At its November meeting the library board asked the local utility companies to proceed with relocation of their lines. Ohio Edison Company agreed to move its cables without charge. Formal application to the State Library of Ohio for a grant of \$550,000 in federal funds was sent.

On January 14, 1965, the board learned that an injunction sought by the Siff Shoe Company to prevent appropriation of their property had been granted by Judge John Kelly of the Common Pleas Court. The help of Squire, Sanders & Dempsey was quickly sought to make certain that future appropriation ordinances would stand up. On March 11 the board approved purchase of the Belenky property for \$65,000 and the Siff property for \$130,000. An appropriation suit was approved for the Lieberman parcel. That suit was decided for the owner at \$77,500. No appeal was made. On June 17 the Doyle property was purchased for \$95,000. Final architectural plans were approved and the architects were authorized to advertise for bids.

The State Library of Ohio approved the library's earlier request for \$550,000 from federal funds through the Library Services and Construction Act. On July 15 Munn announced that an additional grant of \$301,863 from unused federal funds had been obtained from the State, bringing the total amount of grant money to \$851,863.

Low bids approved on July 26, 1965 were from Miletta Construction Company, general contractor at \$2,085,978; Spohn, plumbing at \$94,355; Zindle, heating and air conditioning at \$642,374; and Keller Electric at \$239,967 for a total of \$3,062,674. Bidders were warned that the penalty clause for delays would be strictly enforced. The construction order to proceed was issued on August 20, 1965, with completion date to be 730 calendar days from that date.

Architects Tuchman and Canute were engaged to plan and execute the furnishing and equipping of the building at a fee of eight percent. Mrs. Harry Stevens gave \$15,952.49 on behalf of her mother, Mrs. Bertha W. Morgan, to be used for the children's section of the new library and for underwriting the Don Drumm mural for the Fine Arts Division wall. (Morgan had been the landlady for North Branch library before its new building was opened). Purchases of the Isroff and Memmer buildings to complete the library site were approved. Demolition of the already purchased buildings started on September 9 and the ground breaking ceremony occurred on September 15, 1965, with Mayor John Ballard and board member Walter E. deBruin, Sr. officiating. Efforts to secure "open spaces" money to buy the corner property at Main and Mill Streets resulted in a suggestion from Julian Suso that the Cascade Urban Renewal Project be amended to include this area.

Years later Gordon Canute told *Akron Beacon Journal* reporter Frances B. Murphey that he

considered Main Library his “proudest architectural achievement.” Canute retired in 1990 after a forty- four year architectural career during which he designed other buildings important to the Akron skyline (*Akron Beacon Journal Beacon Magazine*, October 24, 1993).

In early spring of 1966, the library board was notified of a “water problem” encountered at the site. Munn remembered the event well. “I’ll never forget the morning I walked down High Street past the huge 200 foot square hole in the ground to see a lake - with the seat and radiator cap all that was visible of a big Caterpillar tractor!” Natural springs on the site were the cause of the unexpected lake. The architects, who knew there was water on the site but didn’t dream there was so much, arranged for installation of a well point system to dry out the site. This was approved, at a cost of \$127,944.

On March 17 and again on March 25 the building committee met to discuss a problem with the Bear Building which housed the Internal Revenue Services. Cracks had been observed in the building next to the excavation site since December 15. The situation became critical. Faulty shoring of the Bear Building was the cause and Miletto, the general contractor, was put on notice that it was his responsibility to protect the building.

The services of Rice Hershey and John Wolfe, attorneys, were retained. On April 18 Miletto was told to take measures to protect the Bear Building or his contract would be cancelled. He refused. On May 6 an injunction was granted Miletto to restrain the board from terminating his contract. A hearing was held, the injunction was lifted and later denied. On May 21 the board approved letters to the contractor and his surety, U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty Company, cancelling the contract. The surety company denied responsibility and would take no action.

The board, which was not held responsible for the damage to the Bear Building, nonetheless had to take action and entered into a contract on an emergency basis with Spencer, White & Prentiss to underpin the Bear Building at a price not to exceed \$33,900. Boyas & Bauman, sub-contractors for Miletto, were authorized to continue operation of the well point system to dry out the construction site. The water that was causing so much trouble for the library was remembered fondly by an elderly patron who told John H. Rebenack, Assistant Librarian, “That water was the best in town. There used to be a pipe and a tin can attached to it, and we’d go downtown to get a cold clear drink of water on a hot summer day!”

On July 1 the board awarded a contract to the next lowest bidder, Ernest Alessio Construction Company for the sum of \$2,281,600, to complete the work started by Miletto, effective immediately. Hershey and Wolfe were authorized to file suit against Miletto and U.S. Fidelity & Guaranty Company for non-performance of contract and bond. The suit was filed September 28.

Then - at last - things began to happen on the construction site. On July 18, 1966, the first delivery of steel for shoring was received, and on July 26 at the first job meeting with Alessio, it was estimated that shoring and excavation would be completed in 60 days, and the basement floors up to the Main Street level would be finished by early January, 1967. On October 5 the first concrete was poured for footers “bigger than boxcars,” according to onlookers. These were completed on December 1. On October 25 erection of a tower crane began. The crane, a new piece of construction equipment in the United States at the time, stood in one spot throughout the building process. A boom

extended over the entire site with a counterweight at one end and a hook for lifting at the other end. The crane grew internally, allowing for construction of a multi-story building with one piece of equipment. When the crane was removed, the space it had occupied became the library's elevator shaft. By November most of the shoring was done, foundation footers were poured and walls were formed on the Main and High Street sides.

An enlarged pumping system was approved at a cost of \$35,000 to handle the water from the natural springs which had flooded the construction site. The springs were enclosed for future use for air conditioning and also in fountains and reflecting pools. The water was later found to be too full of minerals to use.

Discussions were held between the United Fund (now United Way) and C. Blake McDowell, Sr. concerning purchase of the Summit Street building. Declining the library building, United Way eventually built a home for itself on North Prospect Street. Charles Mayer Company purchased the Summit Street building for \$350,000. Board approval of the sale occurred on April 10, 1969.

In 1967 the County Budget Commission granted \$250,000 from its capital improvements budget for the library construction. Architect Gordon Canute asked Brimfield artist Luke Lietzke (Mrs. Rolland) to serve as design consultant for the new library. Lietzke, a ceramist, had worked for nineteen years as Curator of Design at the Akron Art Institute. In her library role, Lietzke traveled as far as Peru seeking art objects for the library, remembering that "everywhere we went we looked at libraries. Little things like chair and table legs had to coordinate; the visitor was not to be exposed to a sea of crossed or straight legs! My goal was to make the library a pleasant, restful place to free your mind to allow you to concentrate on what you were trying to accomplish. My biggest concern was that when you looked up, you should rest your eyes on something pleasant."

Carpeting for the immense building was another major concern for Lietzke. It was agreed that, since the building was all wood and concrete inside, a patterned floor would break up the vastness and make certain areas more intimate.

"Lee's, the carpet company, said 'design it,' so I wove hunks of yarn with skeins of color to develop a color design and texture on burlap. Then when we agreed, the carpet company made up samples. The finished product was not too decorative but interesting. And the books on the shelves provided color."

That carefully selected, specially woven carpeting of geometric circles and squares in varying neutral colors made especially for Main Library, originally costing \$77,000, was in 1988 almost nineteen years old. It bunched in many places, had been stained by flooding on the first floor, and was heavily worn by the thousands of feet which had passed over it since the "new" Main Library opened. That year, 1988, the wool broadloom was replaced with a nylon fusion bonded modular carpet tile. Since a minimum of 5,300 square yards of carpet had to be replaced, installation took place after library hours. The eighteen-inch square tiles, which were individually placed, were installed without the need to move the book stacks. Costigan's Office Supply of Akron supplied the carpet at a cost of \$168,551. Two offers were made for the used carpet: one from the Akron Civic Theater and the other from the Boys and Girls Club of Portage County. Terms of removal of the carpet made it unusable, so the requests were turned down.

Lietzke remembered that when her proposals for art work were presented to the board by her employers, Joseph Tuchman and Gordon Canute, they were told to “remember that we are planning a library, not a museum!” But the board authorized individual commissions for the artistic items she suggested. Lietzke, looking back at those exciting times, remarked in 1992, “The quality of the art is lasting. The Wheeler wall in the main floor lobby is timeless.” And twenty-four years later, both Munn and Canute commented on the value and beauty of Lietzke's selections.

Robert J. Wyatt of Tuchman & Canute presented plans for a pneumatic tube system at \$37,218 to be included in the equipment budget. Airmatic Corporation won the tube system bid for \$35,218 plus \$5,000 for extra costs. Glitches in the early days of service continued till 1980 when the tube system was taken out of use. On May 2, 1967 a city-wide construction strike involving most of the construction unions caused all activities to cease on the library site and elsewhere. Work resumed on August 21.

Munn commented that the ten-year building project was complicated by many diverse issues not related to construction. The library board yielded to the school board's request to delay requesting money because of the school board's own levies on the ballot; a bond issue failed; the subsequent successful bond campaign was followed by extensive planning for the new library; making a decision on an appropriate site in light of the fluid state of redevelopment of the central business district took time as did site acquisition and development of the building plans. Water problems and the change of contractors cost eight months. Add to all that an area-wide construction strike and the completion date wound up a year behind schedule.

There was a happy note to all this. Funds received from the bond issue were in library hands, invested carefully, and accruing interest during the delays!

Chapter 3

The Move

While board members and Munn were totally immersed in construction problems, others were doing their part toward decoration of the new facility. Early in 1967, William Worrell, Bearfoot Sole official and past president (1963-65) of the Friends of the Libraries of Akron and Summit County, announced a \$40,000 drive to purchase art work for the new building. Purchases would include the decorative Lietzke screen at the first floor registration desk, the Fine Arts Division wall mural, sculptured clock, pots, planters and a William Schock painting.

Mr. and Mrs. John S. Knight, *Akron Beacon Journal* publisher and his wife, gave their Steinway grand piano for use in the 182-seat third-floor auditorium. The gift fulfilled a dream of 1957-62 Friends president, Emma Holloway Shreffler (Mrs. James) that the library should have a fine piano. Local organizations which pledged money for art and furnishings included Quota Club, Zonta International, Altrusa, Soroptimists, Pilot Club, National Council of Catholic Women, and College Club of Akron.

Meanwhile, library service continued as usual to patrons who asked for automobile and radio repair manuals, civil service examinations, books on Vietnam, occult phenomena, self-defense, health, diet and new math. Questions of the year included: How do you hatch octopus eggs? Was Uri Zhivago real? Is a begonia leaf poison? What is the best glue for attaching a ruby to one's navel?

During this period of relative calm, R. Russell Munn announced his retirement. Declaring that it was time to leave completion of the building in the hands of his competent successor, John H. Rebenack, Munn reported that he and his wife, Helen, planned to move to Tucson, Arizona. They would settle not far from the home of their daughter, Jocelyn Parsons, who lived in Phoenix.

Once the shock of the announcement was over, the Library Staff Association joined the Board of Trustees in honoring the Munns at a September 24, 1967 reception at the Akron Art Institute then housed in the original Carnegie Library building. William G. Johnson, Staff Association president, presented to the board a portrait of Munn which had been painted by Munn's good friend Elmer Novotny, chairman of the Kent State University School of Art. The portrait, commissioned by the Staff Association, hangs today in the third floor lobby across from the auditorium which bears Munn's name. It serves as "a constant reminder of a gentle man with the persistence to make dreams come true," wrote the *Akron Beacon Journal's* reporter, Helen Carringer.

The entire community paid tribute to Munn at a farewell testimonial dinner held on October 4 in the Downtown Holiday Inn, (now Gallucci Hall on The University of Akron campus). Over 250 citizens came to hear civic leaders praise the man and his accomplishments. Speakers included Akron Mayor John Ballard; Library Board member Walter E. deBruin, Sr. ; Associate Professor and gallery director at Kent State University School of Art, Leroy Flint; *Akron Beacon Journal* associate editor James S. Jackson; Akron Board of Education President Robert Mohler; Dean of KSU's Library School, Guy Marco; president of the library board, Frank W. Steere, Jr.; director of the State Library of Ohio, Joseph Shubert; and Dr. L. Quincy Mumford, director of the Library of Congress and a friend of Munn's from their days together in the New York City Public Library.

William Berger, assistant promotion director of the *Akron Beacon Journal*, presented a plaque in honor of Munn's twenty years as a judge of the newspaper-sponsored Spelling Bee. As a going-away gift from all their friends, a ceramic piece created by Luke Lietzke was shipped to the Munns for the patio of their Arizona home. In responding to all the praise, Munn stoked up his trademark pipe and in his usual dry style commented, "I am trying to be modest but I don't feel humble. I'm proud - of my wife, of the library board and staff, and of the City of Akron!" The Munns departed the next day for the Southwest.

Following Munn's departure, organizational personnel changes were authorized. John H. Rebenack was appointed chief librarian to succeed Munn, the position becoming official on September 31, 1967. Three assistant librarians were named to succeed Rebenack: Mary E. Earle, technical processes; Luanna Stahlecker (Mrs. Lotar), Main Library; and Ronald Tollafield, branches and extension.

On June 12, 1984, Munn returned to visit the building which he was so instrumental in creating. He toured the library which his vision had inspired and was greeted gleefully by his former co-workers. He was also honored at a reception for the public in the exhibit hall named for his successor, John H. Rebenack. While in Akron, Munn participated with Boy Scout Troop #74 in a tree-planting ceremony in the High Street court.

Successor Rebenack was noted among branch staffs for having a screwdriver and pliers in his pocket whenever he came to visit, with which he effected immediate repairs to things like recalcitrant charge-out machines. A native of Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania, Rebenack came to the Akron library from the Elyria, Ohio Public Library where he was director. Rebenack received the bachelor of arts degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a bachelor of science degree in library science from Carnegie Library School. He served during World War II from 1942 to 1945 with the U.S. Army in the Mediterranean Theater. Upon his return he was appointed to the reference department at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, moving in 1950 to the Salem, Ohio Public Library where he served as director. The Elyria appointment came in 1953, followed by the appointment as assistant director of the Akron Public Library in 1957. He succeeded Munn as head of Akron Public Library in 1967; his salary was \$17,500.

By March 1, 1969, construction on Main Library was completed. April 27 was the date set for open house and dedication of the 150,000 square foot new building which cost \$5,500,000 to build and equip. Moving day came. The Summit Street building closed at 5 p.m. on Friday, March

14; security guard Jerome Foreman taped a "Closed" sign on the front door. Library Movers and Consultants Company of Cincinnati did the moving. They rolled in book carts on dollies, moved the books onto the carts, trucked the carts to the new library, and shifted the books from the carts to the new shelving. "Easy!" they said. The company had recently moved the University of Minnesota's library of over a million volumes and expected no trouble in Akron where the collection consisted, at the time of the move, of 706,513 volumes, 2,386 periodical and serial subscriptions, 8,912 records, and 1,495 films and filmstrips.

Six new divisions supplanted three at the Summit Street library: Philosophy, Religion and Education; Language, Literature and History; Fine Arts and Music; Information Division; Science and Technology; and Business, Labor and Government. Following endless staff hours of debating how the collection would be divided into the new divisions (do sports belong in Science and Technology or Fine Arts?) every book in the Summit Street library was tagged with a colored card designating direction to one of the six new divisions or areas as well as new shelf numbers. The books were then "delivered like mail to the post office," according to Warren Skidmore, head of Language, Literature and History Division. In actuality, it wasn't that simple. Curtice G. Myers, head of Science and Technology Division, remembered how tired everyone was, getting the new stacks into order. "In Science and Technology, we had just finished putting the last book on the shelves. John Rebenack appeared a short time later and said the architects had made a mistake. The shelves were a foot off-line. All the books would need to be removed while the shelves were put in the right place. I sat down and cried."

Luanna Stahlecker, Assistant Librarian for Main Library, remembered that on moving day the only phones working were on the third floor, the elevators weren't working at all, and that the movers, all union workers, went home at the end of their shifts, leaving carts and books everywhere for staff members to regroup. (Miss Edgerton would have found the scene a familiar one.) However, order came out of chaos in time to open the new doors to the public.

On March 24, 1969, the day the library opened for the first time, the *Akron Beacon Journal* reporter, Mickey Porter noted that it rained all day, workmen were still installing wires for telephones and other equipment, and that the third floor was not open to the public at all because damage from a small fire in the upstairs exhibit hall had not yet been completely repaired. Porter commented on toadstools on the floor in the Children's Room. But no, in spite of the rain, they weren't toadstools—they were little round wicker hassocks for children to sit on which were outfitted with light green cushions! The reporter also noted that many of the female staff members were wearing miniskirts.

Also in place for the library's first day were the art works which grace the building twenty-five years later. Because federal construction funds included a designated percentage for "Art in Architecture," it was possible to commission or purchase major art items to enhance the new building. Local artist Luke Lietzke was employed by the architects to plan and coordinate the building's internal design. Under her guidance art was selected, almost all created by area artists including faculty members from both Kent State University and The University of Akron. Among Lietzke's selections were Harry Wheeler's wall-mounted teakwood sculpture which greets visitors as they come through the Main Street doors. Its theme comes from Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem,

“The Flower,” dealing with genetics and that science's relation to knowledge and education. Also on the first floor is the Dream Wall of stoneware and glass designed by Luke and Rolland Lietzke. The wall's motif relates to the history, religions, literature and fiction of the world. **“The Birth of Athena”** by Robert Morrow hangs on the west wall of the second floor reading area. The sculpture is fiberglass formed over chicken wire on a wood frame. Color was obtained by mixing dry color pigment into liquid plastic, then drying it on the form. The various elements of the wall mural symbolize Athena, Greek goddess of war, wisdom, literature, drama, and womanly arts.

Don Drumm's second floor wall sculpture of metal, hardware cloth and wire covered with gray concrete sprayed in thin layers, then troweled for textural effects, brought forth all sorts of interpretations from the public. When tours began after the library opened to the public, one group of second graders became legendary to staff members and tour guides. When viewing the Drumm sculpture, the children were asked what they thought it meant. One youngster, thinking of his parents' discussion about the Cuyahoga River catching fire near Cleveland (June 22, 1969) said without any hesitation, **“It's Lake Erie! Can't you see all the waves? And those brown things are the pollution!”** Drumm also created the **“Garden of Fantasy,”** a stable of colored plastic pieces, to hang in the third floor stairway. The stable was commissioned by the Library Staff Association.

Items for the Children's Room appealed to adults as much as their little ones. Leroy Flint's aluminum mobile of a flock of birds and Frances W. Robinson's sunny stitcheries of birds, beasts and flowers lent contrast to Robert Culley's metaphysical boxes which were described as **“happenings.”** In the staff lounge, where library personnel view it every day, stands the Jody Klein wooden dividing wall, a spoof on the Dewey Decimal System, created with antique forms and wooden type. In the High Street Court Robert Wick's *Water Venus*, a 1100 pound bronze fountain, bubbled water down its graceful sides into a reflecting pool. Paintings, tapestries, vases, clocks and photographs were included in the art objects added to beautify the new library (see appendix for full list).

Everything was eventually ready. On Sunday afternoon, April 27, 1969, the new Main Library was dedicated to the use of the people of Akron and Summit County. Master of Ceremonies, board president Frank W. Steere, Jr., presented the Reverend Robert W. Stackel, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, who gave the invocation. Girl Scout troops 10, 11, 579, 1041 and Boy Scout troops 204, 2204, 3204 presented the American flag with appropriate ceremony. Walter E. deBruin, Sr., board secretary and chairman of the construction committee, presented the building to the community; John Ballard, mayor, responded. Music was provided by a string quartet from The University of Akron.

John H. Rebenack introduced retired librarian, R. Russell Munn who gave the dedication address. Munn stated proudly: **“I have seen most of the main library buildings of this country. Not one is as good or as beautiful as this one. I hope you will accept it as a fact that, in its class, Akron now has the finest public library system in the U.S. or in the world! Use it, enjoy it, support it—and take appropriate pride in it.”**

Munn also paid tribute to the City of Akron (he who refused to consider putting the new building anywhere other than downtown). **“This community has a proud past; it can have an even greater future. Indeed, it can be one of the great cities of the world,”** he said, **“depending on whether**

it consciously pursues the path of greatness. Greatness is more than size and wealth.” Referring to the beauty of the new library, Munn continued, “The really great cities of the world are great because they included in their plans the essential elements of beauty and harmony. They were concerned with feeding the soul as well as the body. This library does both.”

The population of Summit County in 1969 was 461,410. Service to this public would be greatly improved by the creation of the six new divisions at Main Library. The Drive-In Window opened too, on Maiden Lane alley north of the building. Patrons entered from High Street and exited down the steep incline onto Main Street. Patron response to the new services was positive. By the end of 1969, circulation for Main Library rose 28.5 percent with 304,460 books loaned to voracious readers, the highest recorded total circulation since 1940. Circulation for the entire system increased 66 percent with 1,927,006 books loaned.

Munn's stamp on the new library was apparent to Keith Doms, director of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Public Library. Considered by Munn the outstanding authority on library buildings at the time, Doms offered the following praise in a letter to the retired librarian following a visit in early 1975: “I had my first opportunity to see your new library in Akron about ten days ago and enjoyed the experience very much because it was like seeing you again. Your sensitivity and appreciation for beauty, color, form and line is everywhere. Your imprint is unmistakable and the community is much the better for it. It is absolutely the finest building of its size I have seen.” The Akron Chamber of Commerce thought so too, giving the new building its Civic Design Award.

Chapter 4

Library Court, Park

R. Russell Munn, in his final report to the library board following announcement of his 1967 retirement, reminded the seven trustees that construction problems should not divert their attention from the original plans to make the new library not only efficient, but also beautiful. His other concern dealt with a proper setting for this as yet uncut jewel he was leaving.

Plans were already underway for the High Street court, the walled area sheltered from the traffic of the thoroughfare above. Installed in the pool in the court was former Kent resident Robert Wick's fountain, *Water Venus*, a bronze casting, hollow but weighing 1100 pounds. Water bubbled from three openings in the head of the figure, adding a lustrous patina over the years. Ground water from the site was originally used in the fountain, but the many natural chemicals clogged up the openings, so city water was eventually substituted.

Following the opening of the library, the Garden Forum of Greater Akron dedicated the Kate Clapp Garden in the High Street court honoring the *Akron Beacon Journal's* long-time garden editor. Tiny, white-haired Kate enjoyed every minute of the event on September 11, 1969. Every time she visited the library thereafter she checked on "her" garden. The 20-foot square plot at the time of dedication contained a cement Japanese lantern, one franklinia tree, nine white azaleas, 33 sergeant juniper, and one boursalt pink rhododendron. Mayor John Ballard spoke at the dedication as did Mrs. David R. Taylor, president of the Garden Forum of Greater Akron. Present in addition to Kate were her husband, William, and her daughter, Connie Frase (Mrs. Milan) of Coshocton.

Excitement descended on the Kate Clapp garden one sunny June day in 1973 when a huge black swarm of bees settled on one of the trees, keeping patrons at a curious, careful distance. T. E. Topper, local bee-keeper, came to collect them, not an instant process. He came in his bee-keeper's gear, laid out his hive frames and then went away. He returned late in the day when most of the bees had followed the queen onto the frames. Closing the frames made it easy for Topper to then carry away the swarm. Onlookers kept a watchful eye on the proceedings from a safe distance throughout the afternoon. The swarm spurred an instant demand for books on bee-keeping and bee-raising.

The long cement bench facing the High Street court pool and fountain was dedicated to Evelyn G. Cage, an 18-year employee of Akron Public Library when she died of cancer in 1965. Cage held a library science degree from North Carolina University. At Main Library where she

served as assistant in the Adult Service Division, she was the first African-American to work in a public position. For the last three years of her life she was head of Wooster Branch. Cage was the sister of Mildred Wright, her successor as the head of Wooster Branch. When Cage died in 1965, the Staff Association reserved funds for a bench dedicated to her memory in the then only-dreamed-of High Street court. Memorial contributions were added to the funds, and the cement bench was installed following construction of the library. The plaque on the bench reads: "Given in memory of Evelyn G. Cage, Library Adult Service Division and Wooster Branch, by Staff Association of Library and Friends."

In 1981, the Akron Society of Artists commissioned Sister Evangeline Doyle, O. P., of Our Lady of the Elms to create a family sculpture to celebrate the ASA's fiftieth anniversary. The sculpture was to be given to the City of Akron. Bureaucrats debated so long over where to put the statue that the fiftieth anniversary of the Akron Society of Artists came and went. Finally Sister Evangeline decided the white Indiana limestone sculpture of a father reading to his child while the mother listens would be appropriate for the library's High Street court. Architect Gordon Canute facilitated the installation of the sculpture on a large stone bench already in place. Titled "The Story", the 5000 pound sculpture was dedicated a year after its commissioning on September 9, 1982.

In 1988, Frank W. Steere, Jr., board member for 30 years, asked that his expiring term of office not be renewed. Steere served the board on the finance committee, the building and grounds committee and as president. There were significant changes during his tenure: the construction of the new Main Library in the 1960's, conversion of the system from a school district to county district library in the 1970's, and passage of the first temporary operating levy in the 1980's.

Steere wrote in 1993, "For those of us who had the good fortune to be on the library board during this project (construction of Main Library), we had a busy and exciting time and we felt that we had been involved in a project which was important to our community."

Steere remembered creation of the Summit County Council of Libraries as a most important development during that time. The council, an informal association of the seven separate library systems in Summit County, developed the formula for allocating funds among the systems. Steere commented, "Summit County was unique in that we developed a formula taking into account the many different factors which had to be considered. Other counties were envious of our procedure but none of them ever succeeded in developing a formula on which they could all agree." Following a party to honor Steere, his fellow trustees named the High Street court, encompassing the Kate Clapp garden, the Evelyn G. Cage bench, the Akron Society of Artists sculpture, and the Wick fountain and pool, the Frank W. Steere, Jr. Courtyard.

In his final letter to the library board, Munn expressed his concern about the Main and Mill Street corner. "In order to provide a proper setting," he wrote, "it is most important that the Main and Mill Street corner be developed into a downtown park. This should have a pool and fountain, and I hope a design can be developed which would symbolize the cascade and old canal locks which were so important in Akron's early history" (the City of Akron developed the cascade memorial during its reconstruction of the canal locks just west of Main Street on Buchtel Avenue).

Through the efforts of C. Blake McDowell, Sr., a gift of \$200,000 was secured from the

Knight Foundation. The funds were used to buy and clear the property at Main and Mill Streets. The Knight Foundation gift made possible completion of the original plans to establish a park on that corner, one of the most prominent downtown intersections. McDowell commented that the park “would eliminate the last eyesore piece of property in the downtown development.”

Akron designer F. Eugene Smith, known nationally for his “Why Ugliness?” slide shows, was selected by the board to design the Main and Mill Streets garden in cooperation with James H. Bassett, landscape architect from Lima, Ohio. Smith's proposal, accepted by the library board and the Urban Design and Fine Arts Commission of the City of Akron, included trees, shrubbery, walkways, kiosk, and waterfall. The estimated cost was \$200,000. Frank W. Steere, Jr., still board president, remarked that development of the park would depend on how much money could be raised.

Ultimately, plans were scaled down, the waterfall was discarded, and the board approved \$37,500 from the library's Permanent Improvement Fund for development of the park. The City of Akron provided \$25,000; Mr. and Mrs. Louis Myers gave \$10,000 for a sculpture to be placed in the park. The couple recommended a steel work by George Sugarman, a New York artist. The sculpture was at the time sitting in the Akron Art Institute courtyard for passersby to see and discuss. The board was ambivalent about the suggested sculpture, partly because the artist was not a local person and partly because it cost more than the original \$10,000 gift. An Ohio Arts Council grant was sought and a request was made to the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The latter organization eventually provided a matching grant through the program, “Works of Art in Public Places.” The decision to accept the sculpture took almost a year. It was not in place for the dedication of the library park.

Dedication of the park itself occurred on October 31, 1975, completing the original plans for Main Library and its surroundings. Fred Gillespie & Sons of Akron did the landscaping. Major trees for the park, each valued at \$400, were given as memorials to Harvey G. Cleminshaw, Charles M. Conaway, John and Cora Gudikunst, Earl G. Gudikunst, Anna R. Gudikunst, Ruth I. Wilkinson, Emanuel R. Isroff, George H. and June C. Meyers, Charles Sacks, and Diana McKean Wallace. Commemorative trees were given by the Akron Jewish Community Federation, Firestone Park Citizen's Council, Friends of the Akron-Summit County Public Library, The Garden Forum of Greater Akron, and Staff Association of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. Friends of the Library hosted a luncheon prior to the dedication for officials and donors, then served cider and pumpkin-faced cookies to patrons and staff after the event.

The NEA grant was received in May, 1976. Sugarman came to Akron in June to consult with library personnel and Lou and Mary Myers to determine the appropriate base, color and location in the park for the twelve-foot tall, 3,700-pound sculpture. Smith and Associates were selected to create the base for the sculpture, to cost no more than \$1,500. The decision was made to paint the Cor-ten steel sculpture, titled *Roland*, bright yellow. Presentation of the sculpture to the community was held on September 10, 1976. Rain caused presentation ceremonies to move inside Main Library where a friendly crowd listened to Sugarman talk about his work. Great pains were taken to underscore that funds for the sculpture came entirely from private donations and the National Endowment for the

Arts.

When the United States marked its Bicentennial Year in 1976, a time capsule was placed in the library park, to be opened in the year 2025. The contents were prepared by the City of Akron and the Summit County Historical Society (see appendix for contents).

Chapter 5

Problems With Money, 1969-1993

Beautiful new building; service to the public reestablished and going well; all's serene in the Akron Public Library picture, right? Wrong! Librarian Rebenack reported in the 1969 *Annual Report*: "As the decade ended, not all events bode well for improving library services in this county. A development unrelated to the brighter occasions of the year was notification by the Budget Commission in November of a 5.4 percent budget reduction. Our 1969 allocation was cut \$101,000. Economies effected in the last six weeks of the year ended expenditures for books and other materials, curtailed some services and reduced staff and hours of opening during the final weeks.

"All Summit County library budgets were reduced equally by the Budget Commission when revenue from the county intangibles tax, the sole support of libraries, fell below the county auditor's estimates upon which the year's allocations were based. Elsewhere in Ohio a similar pattern was not uncommon, indicating that the intangibles tax may have reached a maximum but not a sufficient return for library support. If so, our concern is the possibility that revenue may decline in the next few years, while costs continue to rise, necessitating more drastic retrenchments." Rebenack noted that the budget cuts came just as the library was attempting to adapt to its new building with attendant dramatic changes in utilities costs as well as other new expenses.

The 1969 year-end budget crisis overshadowed much of 1970's activity. The Library Planning Council, composed of library administrators and trustees of Summit County libraries, met twice to discuss equitable distribution of available funds and to prepare recommendations to the County Budget Commission for acceptable allocations for 1970 and 1971. Funds fell far below original budget requests. The effect on the Akron Public Library after the 1969 budget reduction of \$101,000 was a cut in the 1970 request of \$150,000 and another cut of \$234,527 in 1971.

The budget for 1969 was approved at \$1,915,000. In December, 1969, the Summit County Auditor's miscalculation on Intangibles Tax revenue resulted in an instant loss to the library of \$101,000. Expenditures for books, equipment, supplies and salaries were frozen. Bookmobile service and library hours were reduced, and everything shut down completely between December 23, 1969, and January 10, 1970. Appropriations to the Akron Public Library and the other six publicly-supported libraries in Summit County remained at the January, 1969, level: \$154,000 per month. The information may have been apocryphal, but it was said that there were employees

working full time at the library whose salaries were so low that they were eligible for government food stamps. This occurred despite the work of board member, Alfred L. Richmond (1938-1957) who, according to Librarian Munn, "was of great help to me in developing a personnel policy with a proper salary classification scheme."

As he left the library Munn told the board: "Professional salaries should be based on rates which are paid for similar professional work. We have consistently been around \$600 below this national average. It is true that many of our best people are here because they have close ties with this community and might be persuaded to work for less than recognized rates. This can only be done at the sacrifice of good morale which is essential to good service." Professional salaries were not the only ones that worried Munn. He concluded, "Salaries of non-professional staff - library aides, clerks, maintenance workers - must be related to the local employment situation. If working conditions are good and salaries reasonably in accord with the local rates, the problem is much less critical."

"Financial restrictions postponed full utilization of the new library and delayed the expansion of services and programs throughout the system," said John H. Rebenack in the *Annual Report - 1970*. "For the first time in 35 years," continued the report, "we began the new year without an operating allocation, forcing us to borrow funds to pay salaries and provide the barest essentials for public service."

The Summit County Library Planning Council, formed in 1968 to stimulate cooperation among area public libraries, met twice in 1970 to discuss equitable distribution of available funds and to prepare recommendations to the Summit County Budget Commission for acceptable allocations for the rest of 1970 and for 1971. The council, chaired by Gordon Winklepleck, Hudson Library and Historical Society trustee, and by Akron's Rebenack, was composed of the chief librarians, clerk-treasurers, and presidents of the seven libraries and boards of trustees involved. In 1972 the group initiated the Summit County library survey conducted by the Tri-County Planning Commission with Ralph Blasingame as library consultant. The goal of the study was an evaluation of facilities, collections and services.

Out of this survey came the tax allocation formula which took into account the physical plant, area population, and circulation of all the Summit County libraries. From this base the trustees negotiated equitable allocations for all libraries, given the funds available. The recommendations of this group, formally organized as the Summit County Trustees Council in 1975 were accepted gratefully by the county auditor and the budget commission.

The Annual Report - 1970 continued: "The libraries of Ohio are in financial difficulty. Three factors have affected drastically the financing of public libraries in nearly half of the counties in Ohio, including Summit: Intangibles Tax receipts have leveled off; one hundred percent of this tax is allocated to libraries, the maximum they can receive, and is their only source of revenue; the costs of all goods and services continue to rise. Whatever the prospects are for changes beneficial to libraries, they will probably come slowly. Consequently it is essential for the Akron Library Board and staff to manage our resources well to achieve even limited objectives." The budget for 1970 was \$2,230,379.66.

In 1973 the financial situation continued to be grim. Rebenack noted that in 1963 approximately 13 percent of the library's operating budget was spent for books. In 1973 the amount spent represented 8 percent. During those ten years the average retail price of books doubled and the number of new titles available yearly rose from 19,057 to 28,140.

The suspicion that the Intangibles Tax might no longer be adequate for library needs became ever more predominant. The Ohio General Assembly proposed House Bill 1091 which would shift library financing from the Intangibles Tax to a state income tax. There was, however, no guarantee this would provide sufficient funding. A Citizens' Committee to Save Our Libraries met at McDowell Branch on March 24, 1972, to plan defensive strategy. State wide, libraries resisted a change in funding, so the idea was temporarily dropped.

In 1974, a significant change in library structure occurred which would affect the library system far into the future. The board on May 30, 1974, ended the existence of the Akron Public Library and formed the Akron-Summit County Public Library. Officially this action changed the organization of this library from a school district and extension center library to a county district library. The source of funding, the Intangibles Tax, remained the same.

The State Library of Ohio prescribed the procedure for the change-over. First, library representatives met with Conrad C. Ott, superintendent of Akron schools; then the school board passed a resolution granting the change and giving up its taxing authority on behalf of the library. The proposal was then presented to the County Commissioners, who approved and appointed the "new" library board.

Under the county system board members were appointed to a term of seven years, the appointments alternating yearly between the Summit County Commissioners and the Judges of the Common Pleas Court. Those appointed by the Summit County Commissioners were as follows: Frank W. Steere, Jr. to a seven-year term ending May 15, 1981; Walter E. deBruin, Sr. to a five-year term ending May 15, 1979; Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.) to a three-year term ending May 15, 1977; Elizabeth Ricketts (Mrs. E. M.) to a one-year term ending May 15, 1975. Appointed by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas were C. Blake McDowell, Sr., to a six-year term ending May 15, 1980; Dr. Allen F. Killings to a four-year term ending May 15, 1978; and Ron G. Fisher to a two-year term ending May 15, 1976. At this time the library's organizational chart was reorganized, directing the Clerk-Treasurer to report to the Board of Trustees and recommending the hiring of a deputy clerk.

The paper work was monumental. Property was transferred from one entity to the other, the library system's name was officially changed, the budget for 1975 was reaffirmed, and depository resolutions with First National Bank, Firestone Bank and Goodyear Bank were approved. The State Library of Ohio recognized Rebenack as a certified librarian. All library personnel were re-employed. All deeds, maintenance agreements, insurance policies, rules, regulations and policies governing library staff and employment were transferred to the new governing entity. There was even a resolution that the new entity would extend library service to all residents of Summit County to ensure that service would continue as it always had.

As the Akron-Summit County Public Library, the new organization included the Akron City

School District, the Copley-Fairlawn City School District, Coventry Local School District, East Franklin Local School District, Green Local School District, Nordonia Hills Local School District, Norton City School District, Tallmadge City School District, Woodridge Local School District, and those portions within Summit County of the Mogadore Local School District, Revere Local School District, and Springfield Local School District.

With all of these changes, library information was lost in the bureaucratic shuffle. In November, 1981, Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.), the library's representative to the Summit County Trustees Council, reported that Summit County Auditor Tim Davis was unaware of the formula set up by the council for distribution of the Intangibles Tax funds for library use. The council appointed Ed Percy of Twinsburg, Gordon Winklepleck of Hudson and Reid Montgomery of Cuyahoga Falls to meet with the Budget Commission to explain the formula and the reasons for its development by the council. Their mission was successful. Steven Hawk reported to the board on December, 3, 1981, that Davis and Deputy Auditor William L. Teodosio were comfortable with the trustees' formula and would not interfere.

The formula didn't help much when there was no money to back it. Akron Public Library decreased the hours allowed individual student assistants in 1974 in order to pay the required minimum wage of \$1.90. It was noted that the students, who had been paid \$1.10 an hour, were the only library employees then receiving wages below the minimum wage. The budget for 1974 was set at \$2,663,750. In 1975, the budget approved amounted to \$2,702,071.85. The librarian's salary that year was \$25,470.

In 1977 Yarger and Associates of Falls Church, Virginia, were asked to develop an employee job and salary classification survey for the library. The results of the survey were presented in November and accepted with minor alterations. James Yarger recommended that salary increments of 4.7 percent be approved and that the salary scale be studied each year at budget time to enable the library to hire capable personnel and remain competitive with local wages. The Yarger proposal recommended changes in library position titles. These changes were also accepted by the board.

When Steven Hawk became Librarian-Director, he recommended, and the board approved, changing the bi-weekly pay period to semi-monthly beginning January 1, 1981. The reduction of the work week from 38 1/2 hours to 37 1/2 hours equalized working days to five days at 7 1/2 hours per day. Hawk also noted that "a number of adult staff members are being paid below minimum wage." The board adjusted salaries by an average nine percent increase. In 1981 a substitute time policy was approved by the board, allowing all part-time staff to be paid for substitute time at their regular hourly pay.

Projections for the 1982 Intangibles Tax collection indicated a 2.6 percent growth rate, not counting inflation. The library's building and repair fund was inadequate; there was no money to expand audiovisual services. Pressure about money also came from the Staff Association. The organization's president, Cynthia Howe, wrote to the board concerning the need to raise salaries; the student assistant wage, by that time at \$3 an hour, was again below minimum wage. She pointed out that full-time positions in several grades were below the 1982 poverty level figure for a family of four: \$9,862 (this time there was no question about authenticity). At entry level for these positions,

after deductions, the "take home" pay was very close to the 1982 poverty level figure for a single person, age 15-64: \$5,019. She noted that the librarian-director's salary was the only one close to the recommended salary levels for library employees. New forms of financial support were deemed essential.

In 1983, Ohio Governor Richard F. Celeste signed Substitute House Bill 291 eliminating the Intangibles Tax, chief financial support for public libraries. The shift in financing to the State's income tax was to take effect on January 1, 1986. In 1983, Hawk was appointed by the governor as one of five library representatives to the twelve - member Public Library Financing and Support Committee to study how to distribute these funds as well as what impact the change would have on the State's public library system. The committee proposed that public libraries should receive 6.3 percent of the State's income tax for their use. The percentage became effective in 1986. The Akron library budget for 1983 was approved at \$5,622,572.99.

With the Intangibles Tax in effect for two more years (until December 31, 1985), Hawk indicated serious concern for the fiscal future of the library. He told board members that the continued small growth of the Intangibles Tax was inhibiting the development and stability of their institution. His conclusion: the only alternative for additional funds above and beyond the Intangibles Tax must come from a real property tax levy for operations.

He presented a daunting litany:

The intangibles personal property tax in Summit County had increased over the past ten years by 7.64 percent; Consumer Price Index increased by 9.03 percent during the same time period; the average price of library books increased by 17.76 percent; the materials budget of the library increased 12.15 percent; library physical facilities required repairs totalling in excess of \$800,000, while new technologies impacted upon the provision of library services. Hawk's conclusion: the budgetary needs of Akron-Summit County Public Library could not be met with existing revenues.

Deciding that Hawk was correct in his predictions, the board developed a request, pursuant to Sections 3375.40 and 3375.23 of the Ohio Revised Code, that the Summit County Council place a 0.89 mill real property tax levy on the ballot for the primary election to be held on May 8, 1984, the levy to appear on the 1984 tax duplicate for collection in 1985 and to run for a period of five years commencing in 1984. The revenue generated, estimated at \$2,500,000 a year over a period of five years, would be used to acquire additional library materials and for capital outlay and general operating expenses of the library. The issue would not appear on ballots in Barberton, Cuyahoga Falls, Stow, Twinsburg or Hudson since those areas had their own school district-defined library districts. Meanwhile, the library agreed to continuation of service by Peninsula Library to Peninsula, Boston Township and a portion of Boston Heights on behalf of Akron-Summit County Public Library. If the levy passed, the Akron library agreed to pay the Peninsula Library that portion of real estate property tax derived from property located in the village of Peninsula, Boston Township, and portions of the Village of Boston Heights, about \$9,536. The board's resolution was delivered to John Morgan, Summit County Executive, and to Robert Gippen, County Council President. Hawk noted that the request constituted the first cry for help since the library appealed to voters to fund the bond issue to build Main Library in 1962. Those bonds would be retired in 1984 so the hope was that

voters would be agreeable to continue library support in another form.

A Citizens for a Better Library committee was formed with Dr. Mabel M. Riedinger, retired University of Akron professor, and Vernon L. Odom, Sr., executive director of the Akron Community Service Center and Urban League, as co-chairmen. Bernard I. Rosen, attorney, served as treasurer. The levy number on the ballot was, auspiciously, No. 1. Slogan for the campaign was "Invest in Your Library! Pass the word and vote for No. 1!" Volunteers, invited to "Take this day and stuff it!" stuffed and zipcode-sorted 66,549 brochures, working in the sub-basement of Main Library. Personnel Director Richard Rubin was chairman of the project assisted by 150 volunteers. On May 8, 1984, the operating levy passed: 53.1 percent to 46.9 percent. The official count was 37,098 for; 32,800 against.

In 1985, the board approved a permanent operating budget of \$7,865,877 which included the debt service fund, the note due for purchase of the Palace Theater and Virginia Apartments properties next door to the library on the north, and the final note on telephone equipment taken out in 1977. The final payment of \$166,040 plus the 1984 surplus of \$697,663 from the then-defunct Intangibles Tax was included in the budget.

With new money available, salaries were a concern throughout 1985. Yarger and Associates, Inc., of Falls Church, Virginia, returned eight years after their first survey of the library salaries and job classification system. Using Yarger figures, ASCPL's Board of Trustees Personnel Committee took the opportunity of hoped-for better financial fortunes to report that the library ranked thirty-fourth of thirty-seven libraries in Ohio in salary levels. The committee's recommendation was to increase all salaries by ten percent in 1985.

Thomas DuFore, personnel director, reported that the Fair Labor Standards Act did indeed apply to libraries, including entry level student assistant positions. Student rates rose to \$3.35 in June, 1985. DuFore also noted that time and a half must be paid after forty hours of work. It was the law. The recommendations were accepted by the trustees. Because of the levy passage, Akron library salaries had at long last become respectable.

Still concerned with the salary schedule, the board changed the eight-step salary range to a fifteen-step schedule in 1987 with each step representing a 2.5 percent increase and stated that non-probationary employees would receive a one-step increment in the salary schedule one year after their employment. A one-step increment was also approved for the Librarian-Director and the Clerk-Treasurer. Also in 1987, the cost of Travelers Insurance for hospitalization, dental and life insurance rose 9.3 percent on May 1 for one year, cutting into both staff and library funds.

Voters of Summit County renewed the 0.89 mill, five year temporary library levy by a margin of two to one on November 7, 1989. Of 477 precincts, 462 voted for the levy. The final count was 54,883 votes for; 26,452 against. Voters obviously approved of the improvements to library collections, services and facilities which had been undertaken following passage of the first levy in 1984.

Officers of the Citizens for a Better Library Committee received the gratitude of everyone for providing time and talents to make the levy outcome a positive one. Those invaluable Summit County residents included Steven Albrecht, president of the F. W. Albrecht Grocery Company; John

Bartlett, retired secretary-treasurer, United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 880; Dorothy O. Jackson, deputy mayor for intergovernmental relations, City of Akron; Vernon L. Odom, Sr., executive director, Akron Community Service Center and Urban League; The Honorable Thomas C. Sawyer, 14th Congressional District of Ohio, U.S. House of Representatives; and Bernard I. Rosen of Blakemore, Rosen, Meeker and Varian, Co. LPA. All were applauded for their generous support. Also applauded were the various Friends of the Library groups in the system. Their fund-raising efforts and book sales provided the bulk of the money which paid for the campaign since the library could not legally use public money to mount a political campaign.

By mid-1991, levy funds provided the survival margin for the library as the Library and Local Government Support Fund which usually provided 75 percent of monies for the system was cut by nearly \$500,000. The State of Ohio projected a shortfall in income tax collections for the year resulting in a shortage of \$466,973 for Akron-Summit County Public Library. In addition, declining interest rates resulted in a drop of \$24,000 in projected income. The Ohio General Assembly, on recommendation of Governor George Voinovich, further decimated library budgets by taking the actual 1991 income levels and freezing them for 1992. Without the additional income from the 0.89 mill temporary five year levy passed by the voters in 1989, the library would again have been in serious financial condition. The procedures taken to cope with the funding losses included postponing any plans which could be put on hold, phasing in purchases over longer periods of time, and eliminating items which could be cut. While the money to run the system was decreasing at a disastrous rate, library circulation of all materials had climbed by 9.1 percent, indicating continuing patron response to old and new library services.

Toward the end of 1992 it became apparent that the economic situation in county and state would again impinge on library finances. A hiring freeze was instituted in October because of anticipated cuts in the state's Library and Local Government Support Fund. The salary schedule in effect for 1992 was continued for 1993. No anniversary increases were granted.

Because the State of Ohio income tax collections were lagging behind expectations the prognosis was that state funding for 1993 would remain at 1992 levels. To cope with the monetary loss, the library cut off its customary purchase of books and library materials earlier in November than normal. Purchase of all other materials was held up until the end of the year. The \$271,000 saved was needed to balance the budget which by law the library is required to do.

The new state biennial budget for 1993-1995 passed by the state legislature in June of 1993 temporarily reduced the percentage of the state income tax designated for libraries. During the period of the budget, libraries would receive 5.7 percent of the tax rather than the 6.3 percent decided upon when the intangibles tax was eliminated. The board took this change into account when it adopted a temporary budget for 1994 in the amount of \$13,448,543.00.

Chapter 6

Major Concerns, 1976 - 1993

In addition to the library's monetary problems in the early 70 's came a major board change. C. Blake McDowell, Sr., ended his forty-four years of service to the library board in 1976. McDowell, Sr., served on the board longer than any other trustee in the library's history. During those forty-four years he played major roles in the opening of ten branch libraries and the construction of eleven branch buildings. McDowell Branch Library on Smith Road was named for him because of his many contributions, which included purchase of all the tile for that building. McDowell was instrumental in the moves of Main Library from its location in the Carnegie building on East Market Street at High Street to the former *Akron Beacon Journal* building on Summit Street and East Market Street, and to the new building on South Main Street.

McDowell's connections with the newspaper didn't hurt the library. He was, according to Charles Whited, "a key legal strategist in building Knight newspapers" (*Knight: A Publisher in the Tumultuous Century*, E. P. Dutton, 1988). Because McDowell's father-in-law, banker Edward R. Held, was a prime supporter of the newspaper, with family holdings in *Akron Beacon Journal* stock, McDowell had access to resources of the Knight Foundation, established by the Knight family. He secured a gift of \$200,000 for the library to purchase the property at the corner of Mill and Main Streets, allowing for development of the park which completed the plans made in the 1960's for the library and its surroundings.

The library's 1976 *Annual Report* remarked, "The quality of dedication and loyal service to the library set by Mr. McDowell as a trustee, and his personal integrity in response to this public trust, and his courage to make decisions in the public interest, have become, through the library and his role in it, a part of his legacy to the community."

Judges of the Court of Common Pleas selected his son, C. Blake McDowell, Jr., as his successor on the library board. When McDowell, Sr. died at age 94 on February 28, 1985, *Akron Beacon Journal* editor John S. Knight's comment about his friend was recalled: "He was a truly remarkable individual to whom every day presented a new challenge. He was the uncommon man in an age when it has become popular to eulogize the so-called common man."

Four years later the retirement of John H. Rebenack brought new administration to the Akron-Summit County Public Library. Rebenack, Librarian since 1967, submitted his resignation

in March, 1980, and retired that June. A luncheon and reception honoring him occurred on June 27, 1980, in the Main Library exhibit hall which at that time was named the John H. Rebenack Gallery.

The board resolution citing Rebenack's achievements during his twenty-three years with Akron-Summit County Public Library noted that the library budget during his tenure increased from \$736,000 to \$3,942,420. He was applauded for completion of the Main Library building, construction of McDowell Branch, development of Tallmadge Branch and the opening of Norton and Green Branches. Under his tenure the library changed from a school district to a county district library, worked out an equitable sharing of public monies among the seven independent Summit County library systems, and entered the electronic age with membership in the Ohio College Library Center system.

The resolution cited Rebenack's activities outside the library as well, noting that he was president of the Ohio Library Association, chairman of the Library Committee of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and was recipient of the Ohio Library Association Librarian of the Year Award in 1979. Serving the community, Rebenack was president of Kiwanis Club of Akron, Akron Torch Club, the Summit County Unit of the American Cancer Society, and of the United Way Conference of Executives. He received the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the University of Pittsburgh School of Library Science. In his last Librarian's report, Rebenack noted in his wry fashion that he had never missed a Board of Trustees meeting during his thirteen years as Librarian, attending 156 such meetings in all, and that he had never had a contract with his employers.

Both Rebenack and Trustee Frank W. Steere, Jr. were retired when in 1989 the Ohio Library Association presented Hall of Fame Awards to the two, citing their many contributions to the Akron library and to the Ohio Library Association.

Rebenack was succeeded by Steven Hawk who served as Librarian-Assistant Director of Main Library when appointed in 1977 to the staff of the Akron library system. In 1979 Hawk became Librarian-Assistant Director of Branches and Personnel. And in 1980, after a lengthy search with four final candidates interviewed, the board's Personnel Committee chose Hawk. His appointment was effective on July 1, 1980 at the yearly salary of \$29,000.

Hawk graduated from Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio and the University of Kentucky (Lexington) Library School. Before joining Akron-Summit County Public Library, he served as library development consultant for The State Library of Ohio. Previous experience included work as project director of the Miami Valley Library Organization in Dayton, Ohio; Librarian at the University of Kentucky Water Resources Institute; map-filer, University of Kentucky Geology Library, and library assistant at the Dayton-Montgomery County Public Library. He served six months on active duty as a medical laboratory specialist in the U.S. Army Reserve at Fort Knox, Kentucky, and at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Hawk was active on the Governance and Finance Division and the Information Organization Retrieval and Service Divisions of the Ohio Library Association, and was chairman of the Regional Conference Committee in 1980. He was a member of the advisory council of the School of Library Science at Kent State University and of the Division of Continuing Education and Public Services at The University of Akron. He was also a board member for Project: LEARN (Let Every Adult Read

Now). Hawk served as president of the Ohio Library Association from 1986-1987, and in 1992 he was named Ohio's representative to the governing council of the American Library Association. On January 1, 1992, Hawk's employment agreement with the library was extended to 1996.

As one of his first official duties, Hawk recommended creation of a new position titled Personnel Director to "ensure adequate levels of performance" by staff and to give the newly titled Librarian-Assistant Director of Branches and Extension Services the opportunity to concentrate on these areas. Selected to fill the two positions were Rose Wolf as Librarian-Assistant Director of Branches and Extension Services, and Richard Rubin as Personnel Director. Wolf came to the Akron library from the Cuyahoga County Public Library where she headed the Garfield Heights Branch and also served as head of regional adult services at Maple Heights Regional Library. At the time of his appointment, Rubin was on the Akron library staff as a reference librarian in Language, Literature, and History Division.

The Board of Trustees in 1981 adopted a policy echoing, with minor modifications, the American Library Association's policy on the confidentiality of circulation records. The policy included confirmation of the confidentiality of circulation records as well as confidentiality of the names of library users who requested specific materials, making these items available only through a properly drawn subpoena. Personnel records were included in this policy.

The policy was called into question in 1983 when the Office of the Summit County Prosecutor telephoned the Akron-Summit County Public Library to request the circulation records of an inmate being held in the county jail. Library officials demurred, citing the 1981 "Confidentiality of Circulation Records Policy." After considerable legal maneuvering, the Assistant Prosecutor served the Assistant Director and the Librarian-Director with a court order demanding their appearance in court in ten days to show why they should not be held in contempt of court for impeding criminal investigation. The library's attorneys learned that the prosecutor in the case considered the evidence important and would seek jail terms for the individuals named in the subpoena if they refused to comply.

"Within a twenty-four hour period, the library had become subject to the investigative and enforcement powers of the county prosecutor, normally its legal defender," wrote Richard Rubin, Personnel Director (Library Journal, "The Threat to the Library Circulation Records: A Case Study," September 1, 1984).

The library decided to comply with the subpoena. The decision was based on the facts in the case, the prosecutor's limiting his request to only materials germane to the case, and the potential for further damage to the privacy of circulation records throughout Ohio, continued Rubin. The inmate of the Summit County jail whose reading habits were being scrutinized was subsequently sentenced to 385 years on charges which included aggravated robbery, kidnapping and rape.

(Ten years later, the United States District Court ordered a new trial because of "irregularities" in the original trial. The person was again convicted in the course of the second trial. This time the library was not involved.)

Rubin noted, "There is a lingering uneasiness which will forever be associated with this event; a feeling that the principles of free speech were, to some degree compromised because the

legal system failed to fully accommodate the rights of individuals to seek out the ideas of their choosing without governmental intrusion."

In 1987 Hawk testified before the State Senate Judiciary Committee in support of Senate Bill 133 designed to uphold confidentiality of library records and patron information, to be released only following a court order. The issue arose again in 1988 when the board designated Hawk as "keeper of record," the person responsible for overseeing information files, thereby making him the only person authorized to release information after proper review and determination pursuant to library policies. At this time Hawk expected a subpoena for release of circulation records from a branch. He consulted with the Summit County prosecutor who suggested seeking outside counsel. Daniel T. Wilson of the law firm of Vogel and Wilson was engaged following recommendation by the American Civil Liberties Union in Cleveland. The subpoena never came.

The appropriateness of the library's video collection was questioned by a Fairlawn citizen who spoke to the library board in July, 1989 concerning the library's policy of open access to its collection for all persons regardless of age, sex, race, or background. She was especially concerned about the breadth of the library video collection and believed that access to it should be restricted to persons over the age of eighteen. At a subsequent meeting, she cited a portion of the Ohio Revised Code concerning materials "harmful to juveniles" which she believed made it incumbent on the library to restrict its collection.

Board members debated what to do since there was no standard industry-wide definition of "mature themes" as they related to motion pictures. At the same time the board asked the Summit County Prosecutor to address the issue and the responsibilities of the board under the law. Summit County Prosecutor Lynn Slaby provided the following written opinion on the subject: "The library board was granted the power to do all things necessary for the establishment, maintenance and improvement of the public library under its jurisdiction; that it was authorized to make and publish rules for the proper management and operation of said library." However, wrote Slaby, "Section 2907.31 of the Ohio Revised Code states that no person with knowledge of its character or content shall recklessly furnish or present to a juvenile any material or performance which is obscene or harmful to juveniles.... To be 'harmful' the material must also be 'offensive to the prevailing standards in the adult community with respect to what is suitable for juveniles.' "

Board members discussed the issue over a period of several months. They finally decided to alter the open circulation policy regarding videos to allow parents who wished to do so to designate at the time their children applied for library cards that they were restricted from borrowing videos. New registration forms were developed which explained the new policy to parents and alerted them to the extent of the video collection. The new borrowing policy went into effect on October 9, 1989. At that time all borrowers were re-registered for new library cards. The process was made easier because the change coincided with the beginning of bar-coded registration cards for The Library Machine (TLM). Anyone under the age of 18 required a parental signature before a card could be issued.

Discussing this difficult period for both board and library, Anne C. Green, then president of the board, remarked: "The fuss about the videos dragged on and on but it served to educate the public

to their ability to question the collection. I am comfortable with the solution we came up with. The board was not totally in conformity on this matter. However, computerization of library materials helped with the solution because parents could deny access to children on the new registration cards. Less than ten percent of parents did this." Meanwhile a Collection Development Policy was completed to replace the Materials Selection Policy last revised in 1974. Public hearings were held to allow patrons to comment on the Collection Development policy draft. Sixty chose to do so. An overwhelming majority spoke favorably in support of the Collection Development Policy draft report which was approved in final form by the board on May 29, 1990.

Parking space - always a problem! Some relief came with passage of the 1984 levy which provided \$413,250 to purchase and renovate the Arcade Garage at 41- 49 South High Street. Built in 1928, the big old building provided space for staff parking. Property owners in the immediate vicinity of Main Library had petitioned City Council in 1984 to acquire two parcels of land at 36-38 and 40 South High Street, immediately north of Main Library, for the purpose of building a multi-level parking deck for 300 cars. The deck was to be built and owned by the City of Akron. The City would create a special assessment district in the area of Main Library; all land owners in the general vicinity would be assessed the cost of retiring the bonds which the City would issue to construct the facility. It was not to be a free lot and would be run and operated by a consortium of land owners, including the library. The tax assessment was to show on the 1986 tax duplicate. To get the ball rolling, the library board approved purchase of 36-38 South High Street from Victor Hackim for \$110,000 and 40 South High Street from co-owners Rita Blakemore and Howard Calhoun for \$178,000. The library's intention was to resell the property to the city. The deal fell through when not everyone involved agreed to the plan.

In 1986 the Librarian-Director was authorized to negotiate for the Palace Arcade on South Main Street for \$20,000. At the same time property at 72 South Broadway was sold to Paul G. Perantinides for \$65,000 with a \$5,000 down payment and \$60,000 to be paid by July 1, 1991. Mayor Thomas Sawyer, on September 26, 1986, announced plans for a public parking deck adjacent to the library. Construction of the 324 car deck was to begin in 1987 and would cost \$2,750,000, financed by general obligation bonds sold by the City of Akron. In 1987 when construction was supposed to begin, the City of Akron announced that its plans to purchase the Palace Theater and Virginia Apartments from the library would involve lengthy litigation which the city fathers were unwilling to undertake. After discussion, the library board authorized Librarian-Director Hawk to contract with the city to raze the Virginia Apartments and proceed with formal bid specifications and documents for construction of a new surface parking lot on the two properties.

The parking lot became reality in September, 1992 when the Virginia Apartments were razed. The new lot contains 28 parking spaces, four reserved for those with handicapped license plates or stickers. Parking in 1994 cost 25 cents an hour for a maximum of four hours (the towing fee for illegal parking was, according to the *Akron Beacon Journal*, equal to speeding on the Pennsylvania Turnpike). Bennett Construction Company was general contractor; Great Lakes Electric, Inc. did the electrical work. Impetus for development of the lot was provided by construction of the John S. Knight Convention Center, directly across from Main Library on High

Street. Commercial parking lots were lost to that construction as were street parking places.

In September, 1993 insurance underwriters questioned the safety of the Arcade Garage; structural engineers consulted by the library recommended that the library not continue to use it. The nine-level garage provided 165 parking spaces for library staff who paid to park there. This was unwelcome news, particularly in view of reduced parking spaces in the downtown Akron area. Car pools were recommended to the staff.

Again using 1984 levy monies, the library purchased 72-76 South High Street in 1985 to provide additional space for an enlarged Audio Visual Services Division and Mobile Services. Administrative officers of Summit County approved a purchase price of \$376,500 for the building which was located next door to Main Library on the south. Because of five percent interest on the mortgage held by the county, the cost was \$450,118, with the library responsible for the expense of a guaranteed title, title insurance and termite inspection.

According to Environmental Protection Agency regulations, the asbestos had to be removed before the building could be used. Karl H. Rohrer Associates, Inc., received the contract for construction documents and field administration to remove asbestos from 72 South High Street, cost not to exceed \$9,350. Mobile Services moved into the building as soon as the asbestos removal was complete. Until such time as other space was available in the renovated building, the Audio Visual Services Division opened in the area formerly known as Group Services. Patrons were able to browse through shelves of video cassettes to make their selections. Circulation skyrocketed; 955 titles were checked out in one day.

The face of downtown Akron continued to change. Access to Main Street from the Drive-in Window was shut off in 1989 when the city began construction of the Main Street Transitway. This project involved creating a boulevard strip down the center of the street for flowers, trees and other plantings. To continue the drive-in service, the library driveway was redesigned to circle back onto High Street. A small landscaped area was included in the rerouting project to continue the library's commitment to provide attractive surroundings for its buildings and to brighten the downtown area with well-designed green spaces. On Main Street, the Transitway Project, developed jointly by the City of Akron and the Metro Regional Transit Authority, included a heated bus shelter near the library entrance. The sidewalks in the front of Main Library were widened and lined with trees.

Other changes took place inside the building. The office of the Librarian-Assistant Director for Public Services (formerly for Main Library) moved from the tiny Main Library office area on the first floor to a new office on the third floor. The Business Office, bursting its space on the third floor, relocated to the sub-basement.

Since libraries are always affected by the scene outside their doors, public behavior became a concern in 1992. The issue was triggered in part by a suit against a Morristown, New Jersey, public library filed by a homeless man whose staring at patrons and offensive body odor caused him to be ejected by the library staff. A similar question was raised at Main Library where homeless men and women and an occasional prostitute come in to get warm. The board decreed that the following was unacceptable: abusive language, harassing of public or staff, fighting, threatening harm to persons

or property, mutilation of library materials, destruction of library property, failure to wear shoes, or any illegal act. A person engaging in such behavior was asked to leave any library in the system.

Security was expanded at Main Library in October, 1993 following the shooting of a student who was waiting for a bus at the bus stop in front of the library. Two off-duty police officers were retained for patrol during weekday afternoon and evening hours. Cost of the additional security was estimated to increase security costs from \$154,000 to \$196,000. This was in addition to service provided by Bickett Security Service which stationed guards at the entrances to Main Library on both High and Main Streets and also provided security at East, Kenmore, Maple Valley, North, West Hill and Wooster Branches.

Chapter 7

Branches, Extension, Bookmobiles

Once Akron's Free Public Library opened in 1874, exclusivity was abandoned forever. One of the first actions taken by the board was to allow anyone residing outside the city limits to use the library for a fee of \$3 a year. Records show that in 1905 a collection of fifty volumes was placed in the First Congregational Church Sunday School, other unnamed churches and Fire Engine House #4. Distributed in that fashion, no one place could have had many books.

Maude Herndon who became library director in 1920 inaugurated weekly service to Peoples Hospital (Akron General Medical Center) and Children's Hospital (Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron) as well as to handicapped children at Bowen School. Under Herndon's auspices branch libraries were opened. In 1933 Catherine Henry was appointed the first supervisor of branches.

When R. Russell Munn arrived, he recognized that the need to service the growing community meant updating these first branches. He wrote, "There were nine flourishing branches, covering the city quite well. With the exception of East they were all in temporary or makeshift quarters. The job was to house these branches adequately—which we proceeded to do." Bond issues in 1950 and 1951 failed to get the required 55 percent of the vote but passed with sufficient majorities to persuade the County Budget Commission to appropriate funds to construct two new buildings for Ellet and Wooster Branches. Chamberlain Branch was also built, using existing library funds. By the end of 1954, library registrations had increased to 82,459. The library budget had more than doubled in ten years: from \$200,000 to \$595,000. Here are the branches in order of development.

Firestone Branch

Harvey Firestone, Sr., rubber industrialist and founder of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, in 1920 offered space in the third floor recreational hall of his factory, as well as equipment, for Akron's first branch, starting its collection with books which had been circulating among Firestone employees. Herndon supplied a librarian and additional books. The branch in 1938 moved to the former Firestone Post Office building.

On November 29, 1968, after 48 years of service, the branch was closed following a request from Firestone Tire & Rubber Company for use of the space which it had been renting to the library.

Hugh Saviers, branch librarian, conducted a survey of the branch's borrowers and found they consisted primarily of Firestone employees who lived all over the county and took advantage of lunch hours to use the library. These patrons were asked to transfer their patronage to the branches nearest to their homes. According to Saviers' survey, the branch in 1943 circulated 58,419 books or 8.1 percent of total Akron Public Library circulation. At the time of closing in 1968, Firestone Branch circulated 18,998 books, less than one percent of the total. Firestone remains the only branch closed by the library system without a replacement of some kind.

East Branch

Not to be outdone by a competitor, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company on August 15, 1922, rented a room to East Branch Library in the Goodyear Club House at 22 Goodyear Boulevard (in 1994 this basement space was occupied by the Goodyear Hall Tailors). There were 808 books in the collection and five months later, those books had circulated 23,561 times. By 1936, East Branch led in branch circulation (103,500) so it was deemed the logical place for a new building.

When East Branch moved into its new quarters on January 29, 1939, it became the first branch library to occupy a building designed, built, furnished and owned by Akron Public Library. East Branch was constructed on land located at 60 Goodyear Boulevard. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company gave the land with a deed free and clear of encumbrances. The building, built in Tudor style, featured a slate roof, rubber flooring, two fireplaces, and a front sidewalk laid by Works Project Administration labor. Cost of the building was \$45,000. Katherine Seiler, the librarian, served the Akron Public Library and East branch for 32 years, retiring in 1955. Mrs. James Clelland succeeded her, followed by Aileen Chrisp, Hugh Saviers, Mary Ann Smith, Jacqueline Johns, Janet Han, Mary Romans, Victoria Thornburg, Margaret Mancz Pugh, and Catherine Clements.

Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company needed additional space in 1981 to build the new Goodyear Technical Center. The library was asked to allow the closing of Moffat Place, the alley adjacent to East Branch. Goodyear provided an expanded parking area at the side of the branch building in return for this cooperation. In 1987 the roof on East Branch needed repair. Cost to replace the slate roof would have been \$60-70,000. The board settled for shingles at \$12,500.

At the end of 1993, East Branch held 27,453 materials and had a circulation of 79,052. The librarian was Catherine Clements.

Wooster Branch

On November 10, 1923, the former Akron Water Works building at 456 Wooster Avenue became Wooster Branch, the library's third branch. It was the focal point of many different foreign-born groups and during the years 1933 to 1935, people of thirty-three different nationalities were registered borrowers. In 1940 the depth of the old frame building was enlarged by twenty-five feet. In 1951 as part of the library's post-war construction, the County Budget Commission provided money for a new building, and Akron City Council deeded part of Lane Field to the library for that purpose. Wooster Branch was constructed at 600 Wooster Avenue, opening in 1954. The building had 4,944 square feet of space, including a meeting room; cost of construction was \$88,534.

In 1971 Woodrow Nash, student at The University of Akron, created the brilliant mural affixed to the outside north wall of the branch. Nash painted the enormous mural at the Neighborhood Arts Center, then moved it in eleven pieces to the library where it was bolted to the wall. That same year, with the cooperation of Alpha Phi Alpha, a professional fraternity for African-American men, the library began sponsorship of an annual summer reading contest for children. Tracey Kennedy, daughter of Mrs. Willis Kennedy, was the very first champion reader.

In November, 1976, an arsonist's fire at Wooster Branch caused \$27,982 damage in portions of the children's section and the meeting room. Joel Newman Construction Company was hired to repair the damage to the building. The south wall was double-faced with Pittsburgh Plate Glass Miraval made of steel-coated baked enamel and windows of mesh glass at the top. The interior walls were covered with cork and the floor carpeted. Insurance covered most of the cost of replacing furniture, books and equipment. Through the cooperative efforts of staff, community members, and insurance adjustors, the branch reopened for limited service four days after the fire. Within a few months, service was fully restored.

Librarians at Wooster Branch since the 1960s included Evelyn G. Cage, Mildred Wright, Laurel Fischer, David Jennings, Kathryn Averette, and Diane Jackson. At the end of 1993, Wooster Branch held a total of 26,596 materials and had circulation of 32,105. The librarian was Diane Jackson.

North Branch

Herbert Hirshberg, Maude Herndon's successor, officiated at the December 2, 1927, opening of North Branch, the library's fourth, located in a store front at 202 East Cuyahoga Falls Avenue between a state liquor store and confectionery in the North Hill business district. Catherine Henry was branch librarian. A report by Henry for December, 1927 indicated registered borrowers of 1,004 and a book collection of 1,626 volumes. After the first week of service, borrowing was so heavy that Henry reported that the shelves were almost bare. Adult borrowers asked for *The History of Free Masonry*, *Factory Organization and Management*, *Shop Management and Systems*, *Louis IV*, and *Wells' Outline of History*. Early librarians heading North Branch besides Henry were Helen Kraus and Lucille Campbell.

The branch moved to its new building directly across the street at 183 East Cuyahoga Falls Avenue in 1958 with dedication occurring on October 26, 1958. The 4,800 square feet of space cost \$136,000 for lot, building and equipment. Katherine Florence O'Brien Flint (Mrs. Leroy W.), known to everyone as Kitty, served North Branch from 1958 until her retirement in 1970. She had spent forty-five years of her life in library work, fourteen of them in Akron at Wooster and North Branches. Her career in librarianship began with a certificate in library science from Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. In 1937, she received a bachelor's degree from Mather College of Western Reserve University. She worked with The Cleveland Public Library in five branches before joining the Akron library, giving book talks on Cleveland radio stations, and working with ethnic groups in the area. She came to Akron with her husband, who was then head of the Akron Art Institute. She died in 1974. Succeeding her at North Branch were Mary Ann Smith,

Rhudell Dresser, Tanya Jamison, Nancy Johnston, Christopher Bowen, Joyce Adams, and Rosemarie Foord.

On December 1, 1977, the branch celebrated fifty years of service to the North Hill community. Mary Romans, head of East Branch, talked about "The Good Old Days" on a program that included the North Hill Mothersingers directed by Mrs. Bart Hamilton and the St. Martha Italian Dancers under the direction of Vilma Merendino. A time capsule was prepared for future patrons of the branch.

At the end of 1993, North Branch held a total of 32,442 materials, and its circulation was 94,825. The librarian was Rosemarie Foord.

Chamberlain Branch (Firestone Park)

Chamberlain Branch is the successor to the fifth branch originally called Firestone Park Branch, which opened on November 1, 1929 at 353 Reed Avenue, near Aster Street in Akron. Martha Marble was the first librarian, serving also as first librarian for the new building. Succeeding her were Marjorie Clelland, Nancy Miller, Wilma Batcheldor, Patricia Lowry, and Barbara Halfen.

Chamberlain Branch, located at 760 East Archwood Avenue, was the first of the new branch buildings completed in the series built in the 1950s and 1960s; it was dedicated in October, 1951. The library board broke a long-standing rule when it named the building for an individual, James W. Chamberlain. Chamberlain left a gift of \$44,500 in trust for the library system when he died in 1921. Income from that trust has served the library well over the years and is used for many educational purposes. The branch has 4,850 square feet of space and was built at a cost of \$69,690 including furniture and equipment. As part of the renovation of Chamberlain Branch in 1987, the old roof, though still flat, was replaced with a new rubber membrane.

Total materials in 1993 amounted to 32,153; circulation was 122,380. The librarian was Barbara Halfen.

West Hill Branch

Will Collins, named Librarian in 1929, opened number six, West Hill Branch, on January 18, 1930, in a house at 789 West Market Street. Catherine Harkness was the branch's first librarian. According to R. Russell Munn, Librarian who succeeded Collins, Harkness was "made-to-order to serve the best readers who all seemed to live on West Hill." Harkness was promoted to head Main Library in 1944 where, again according to Munn, "her lively appreciation of good writing, her wide knowledge of books and authors and her deep and abiding interest in the needs of our patrons provided an element of quality to our staff which seems almost impossible to replace." Harkness was a graduate of Western Reserve University School of Library Science. She left the Akron Public Library in 1951 to direct the adult service department at Youngstown Public Library. She was a consultant for the Warren Public Library before she retired - to attend classes at the University of Mexico, the University of Puerto Rico, in Nova Scotia and in Washington D.C. She died in Rochester, New York, on May 31, 1990.

In the early 1940s West Hill Branch moved into a dignified old residence at 687 West Market

Street near Highland Square. The cookbooks were shelved in the stairwell; books about sex were in the pantry between the kitchen and the dining room, according to Mabel Twining (Mrs. Paul) who joined the branch staff in 1950. After receiving a degree in library science from Kent State University in 1954, Twining became children's librarian, then head librarian of West Hill Branch. When a new building was erected, Twining moved with it. Twining resigned from the Akron library system in 1969 to move with her husband to San Diego, California where she died in 1992. Librarians succeeding her were Hugh Saviers, Evelyn Wagner, Robert McKay, Mary Romans, Ione Cowen, Diane Klem, Elizabeth Manderen, and Robert Ethington.

The branch benefited from the building spree in 1956 when a new building, 98 x 44 feet in size, was constructed at 807 West Market Street at a cost of \$108,850 including landscaping and parking lot. Leroy Flint, then curator of education at the Akron Art Institute, later Akron Art Institute director and Professor of Art at Kent State University, created a metal sculpture for the children's room on the theme of the portaging American Indian. The art is rich in Indian lore to reflect West Hill Branch's location two blocks from the portage used by the Indians to travel between the Cuyahoga and Tuscarawas Rivers.

Friends of the Library raised \$2,500 for a fountain/sculpture created by local ceramic artists Luke and Rolland Lietzke for the front lawn of the new branch. The fountain, dedicated to Pauline Edgerton, Akron Public Library head for 35 years, consisted of three large enameled copper "flowers" with smaller porcelain shapes mounted on stainless steel rods. This fountain was removed in 1974. Maintaining it had become impossible because of continuing vandalism. Paul Frank, head of National Rubber Machinery Company, bought the parts for \$500, planning to use the fountain in his own garden. There is no record that this occurred.

In 1985 Claudia Zeber, area artist, presented to the branch a sculpture commemorating the 200th anniversary of the portage path, and in 1987 a time capsule was buried on the branch property in celebration of the tenth year of the annual Highland Square Festival.

At the end of 1993, West Hill Branch had a total of 35,617 materials; circulation was 88,889. The librarian was Robert Ethington.

Kenmore Branch

Library service to the Kenmore area began in 1923 with a lending library started in a department store by Louis Grotstein. Akron Public Library took over the book collection after Kenmore's annexation to the city. In 1930 the collection was moved to the second floor of the Kenmore City Building at 957 Kenmore Boulevard. The library occupied Council chambers, sharing the building with a fire department, a bank and a doctor. The Fortnightly Club of Akron served as staff. On January 4, 1957, a new building was dedicated at 2200 Fourteenth Street, S.W. Designed by Tuchman & Canute, architects, the branch has a distinctive glazed vermilion brick wall flanking the entrance. It had a larger collection of books than any previously opened branch: cost of the books alone was \$9,949.64. An experiment in library instruction was also tried for the first time at Kenmore Branch. Between May 26 and June 11, before books could be withdrawn, fifty classes totaling 1,947 students and 56 teachers, were introduced to the library. The staff boasted that every

school-age child in Kenmore had a library card. The first librarian was Julia A. Clark, followed by Elinor S. Earle who retired in 1981. Following Earle were Susan Rice, Judith Rosenberg, and Katherine Forsthoffer.

In 1933, materials held at Kenmore Branch amounted to 34,344, and circulation was 129,667. The librarian was Katherine Forsthoffer.

Ellet Branch

Ellet Branch opened on December 7, 1936, in a rented store room at 604 Canton Road. It was opened in response to a petition signed by more than 1,900 residents. Following the failure to pass bond issues in 1950 and 1951 and because of the demands for additional services in a rapidly growing community, the County Budget Commission appropriated funds in 1951 to construct buildings for Ellet and Wooster Branches.

The present Ellet Branch at 485 Canton Road was dedicated on January 11, 1953. A duplicate of Chamberlain Branch in plan, it has 4,750 square feet of floor space and cost \$71,761. Dorothy Tricker, librarian from 1953 until she retired in 1967, was followed by Aileen Crisp who retired in 1981. Successors included Ronald Jones and Anita Marky.

In 1993, total materials held at Ellet Branch were 31,195; circulation was 171,861. The librarian was Anita Marky.

Maple Valley Branch

On August 19, 1938, Maple Valley Branch opened in the two-story Maple Valley School building at 1303 Copley Road. The Akron Board of Education leased the building to the Akron Public Library for \$1 a year from 1938 to 1952. In 1953 the Akron Board of Education reclaimed its school on Copley Road and Hawkins Avenue because more classroom space was needed for teaching school children. Maple Valley Branch then moved to the remodeled Hull's Restaurant at 1428 Copley Road just west of Frederick Boulevard.

A new building for Maple Valley Branch was dedicated on January 12, 1958 on land deeded to the library by the Akron Board of Education at 1293 Copley Road. The 125 x 135 foot property was adjacent to the branch's previous school house location. The building, designed by Tuchman & Canute, had 5,200 square feet of floor space and cost \$120,000 for construction and furnishings. Contractor was Behling Construction Company. Margaret Coleman was the librarian from opening day in 1938 until her retirement in 1958. She was succeeded by Helen Stahler and Jacqueline Johns.

In observation of its twenty-fifth birthday, Maple Valley Branch on January 12, 1983, offered demonstrations of the library's new mini-computers and a talk by Juliet Saltman, long-time patron and neighbor. That same year Raymond Burgess, a patron, asked the library board to rename Maple Valley and Wooster Branches to honor the deceased civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and current board member, Raymond R. Brown. The board declined, opting to continue naming branches for locations or, as in the case of McDowell Branch, for a local person no longer on the board who had made a considerable contribution to the library. It was noted that a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. collection had been developed as a memorial to the outstanding leader and that his

birthday on January 15 was at that time a floating holiday for staff as well as an open day for special programs and displays. In 1986, the day became a national holiday and all library agencies were closed.

Total materials held at Maple Valley Branch in 1993 amounted to 38,205; circulation was 63,280. The librarian was Jacqueline Johns.

Richfield Branch

In 1946 the Akron Public Library sent its first bookmobile into Richfield Township. Later, Richfield Branch, officially a sub-station, was opened in a room in the Baptist Church becoming the only branch to have a baptismal font installed in its floor. On June 18, 1950, the branch moved to rented quarters at 3903 Broadview Road in the township Fellowship Hall; the book collection was small. Within three months, however, the township trustees had to employ a librarian to handle the increasing business of the library. A formal agreement between Akron Public Library and township trustees for library service was entered into on July 1, 1956. In March, 1960, the library moved into the Town Hall at 3907 Broadview Road. A comfortable rocking chair was part of the decor, and Virginia Kunas headed the library staff. The Village of Richfield in 1976 made application to the Summit County Council of Governments for funding for the construction and furnishing of a new branch building in that community. A bequest of \$63,926.31 from the estate of Isabelle LeVerne Chase was designated to furnish a children's room. With the impetus of the Chase gift, the voters of Richfield passed a 1.7 mill levy in 1979 to build a new branch facility. As things turned out, the Chase bequest was sufficient to furnish the entire building. Ground was broken on April 16, 1980 for the new Richfield Library building at 4300 West Streetsboro Road. Ground breakers were Dorothy Sykes (Mrs. William), former Richfield librarian, and E. June Feiber, Richfield mayor.

The airy, white brick structure was officially opened to the public on June 1, 1981, with dedication on June 14, 1981. Members of the Village Council, Richfield Garden Club, Richfield Historical Society and the local AMVETS all took part. Jean Born (Mrs. John) was librarian in charge. Her successors included Martha Clagett and Elizabeth Reed. In keeping with the current interest in dinosaurs, the Richfield Friends of the Library commissioned a wall sculpture by Terry Dike of a stegosaurus dinosaur; the sculpture was dedicated at ceremonies on May 8, 1993.

Total materials held by Richfield Branch in 1993 amounted to 31,930; circulation was 78,614. The librarian was Elizabeth Reed.

Nordonia Hills (Northfield) Branch

Beginning in 1946, the Akron Public Library bookmobile served the readers of Northfield at schools and shopping areas. The Nordonia Club also maintained a collection of books in the school for use by the public. Northfield Community Library opened on August 13, 1954, in the "Old Dalrymple Place" (now the Palmer House) at 9390 Olde Eight Road next to the elementary school. One hundred volunteers worked to turn the old house into a library. The entire project was sparked by the Parent-Teacher Associations of the area. The library opened under the leadership of Naomi B. Sinks (Mrs. N. Bender). An agreement was signed on March 31, 1955, by the trustees of

Northfield Center Township and the trustees of the Akron Public Library to provide library service to the citizens of the township.

Mrs. Sinks was followed by Dorothy Knight Sykes (Mrs. William E.) who began work at the Akron Public Library in 1952 after raising twin daughters. She received a master's degree in library science in 1957 from Kent State University, and by 1960 was heading the staffs of both Richfield and Northfield Branch libraries. Sykes "was the moving force in establishing the libraries in Richfield, Bath, Peninsula and Northfield" reported the *Akron Beacon Journal* at the time of her death at 91 on May 14, 1993. A graduate of Flora Stone Mather College in 1923, Sykes worked as a psychiatric social worker until her marriage in 1927. She and her husband ran a general store with a potbellied stove and postal boxes at Ohio Route 303 and Old Route 21 in Richfield until 1952. Her many community contacts made Sykes a political force who got things done, especially where establishment of libraries was concerned.

Early days at Northfield were difficult. By 1960, Nellie Croft of the Northfield staff wrote in her annual report to Librarian Munn that "working and housing conditions of the library are deplorable, and since nothing is being done in the way of repair or improvement, they are not likely to be any better. The electric power was off for one week, the basement was flooded for a week, and on Saturday, January 23, the furnace refused to cooperate. We worked in a forty-degree temperature until repairs were made." Four years later, new quarters were opened to serve four political subdivisions with a combined population of 15,000; soon additional space was needed. The present building at 9458 Olde Eight Road in Northfield Center was dedicated on December 13, 1964. Designed by Tuchman & Canute, the building had 5,500 square feet of floor space and cost \$183,187.64 for site, building and furnishings. The branch celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in December, 1989.

In 1963, the combined Northfield-Macedonia school system was renamed Nordonia Hills to signify its territory. And in September, 1990, the Akron library board approved changing the name of the library as well to the Nordonia Hills Branch. The official name-changing ceremony to signify the areas served by the library (Northfield Village, the city of Macedonia, Northfield Center and Sagamore Hills Township) occurred on February 7, 1991. Patricia Johns of Sagamore Hills, past president of the branch's Friends of the library, instigated the change in nomenclature.

The philosophy of art in libraries carried into the branches as well as at Main Library. In 1970 a red-winged blackbird named Sam was immortalized in Leroy Flint's mobile hung at the then Northfield Branch. Sam was a backyard friend of deceased Carl Muetzel, Kiwanis Club president who spearheaded the drive for Northfield's new library. The mobile, titled "Harassing the Crow," was dedicated to Muetzel and financed with community contributions.

Heads of Northfield Branch, now Nordonia Hills Branch, included Ann Rhode, Lucille Wyatt, Phyllis Bratton, Laureen Drapp, Elizabeth Hollis, and Janet Stavole. Total materials held by the branch in 1993 amounted to 31,177; circulation was 147,168. Librarian was Janet Stavole.

Ayres Branch

The need for new service areas did not cease. As population spread, the Fairlawn sub-branch

was opened on November 1, 1932 in an old school building between White Pond Drive and West Market Street (now the Fairlawn Park Garden and Civic Center). This sub-station collection was subsequently moved to Ayres Branch when the estate of Dr. Floyd F. Ayres was settled and his brick home at 1765 West Market Street became the property of the library. Dr. Ayres died in February, 1953. Coroner's investigators found the will of Dr. Ayres which bequeathed his home, \$50,000, and most of his assets to the library, under a living room chair. The will was contested and nearly four years elapsed before the building could be remodeled for library use. It was dedicated as Ayres Branch Library on January 19, 1958. Helen Stahler (Mrs. Gordon) who headed Fairlawn Sub-branch, served as Ayres' first librarian. A modern addition doubling the floor space of the building was completed at the rear of the house in October, 1965. Library artist Hedy Kish Jones (Mrs. Robert) painted an imaginative and colorful wall mural explaining the numbers of the Dewey Decimal system for the children's section. She also provided a brilliant sunburst to brighten up a dark wall. At a later date, Mary B. Prinz of Prinz Office Supply Company presented her doll's house, Inchmere Manor, to the branch. The Southern colonial mansion, on a scale of one inch to one foot, is a seven-room dream house filled with furniture to delight children and adults alike.

Ayres' will stipulated that the land extending to Alton Drive behind the house must be maintained as "a place to rest." Today the land forms a green island behind the branch. Margot Jackson (Mrs. James S.) succeeded Stahler as head librarian, resigning in 1971. Betty Waldman (Mrs. Jack) took her place, followed by Christine Sterner and Andria Caynon. Total materials held by Ayres Branch in 1993 amounted to 45,849; circulation was 215,276. The librarian was Andria Caynon.

Tallmadge Branch

Tallmadge Branch opened on March 20, 1961 at 8 Southeast Avenue in Tallmadge, the result of conferences between Mayor Paul Hill and R. Russell Munn of the Akron Public Library concerning library service for the community. A steering committee which campaigned for contributions became the nucleus of the Tallmadge Library Association. Within three months the original building was leased, remodeled and furnished. Juliet Phillips was librarian from 1961 until her retirement in October, 1976. Her successor was Rosann Anderson, followed by Karen Blakelock, who became Karen Wiper.

John Morgan, a later mayor for Tallmadge, discussed with the Akron library board a lease agreement for a new branch library building in Tallmadge. After many revisions on both sides, the lease finally met with everyone's approval and was signed in May, 1976. The new Tallmadge Branch, designed by Architect C. William Lay and built for library purposes with Tallmadge city income tax funds, was ready to open on January 11, 1977. Cost of construction was \$332,102. The building at 32 South Avenue just off Tallmadge Circle was termed by the *Library Annual Report of 1977* "one of the finest branch facilities in the system." It also noted that branch circulation jumped 35.9 percent after the new branch opened.

Frank E. Lawrence, Tallmadge's "Mr. History," a collector of Tallmadge memorabilia during most of the 100 years of his life, turned over his extensive collection (fifty boxes) to

Tallmadge Branch. To house the materials, the City of Tallmadge, through the Emig Trust Fund given for library purposes, financed construction of appropriate storage units and display cabinets in the meeting room. All the cabinetry was constructed for maximum protection against deterioration. Lawrence began his career with the Summit Wholesale Grocery Company, then worked with Howell-Viggers Corporation in real estate and insurance. The Chamber of Commerce honored him in 1982 as Honorary Historian of Tallmadge and again in 1989 as Citizen of the Year. He is a former president of the Tallmadge Historical Society.

In 1986 the Tallmadge Library Association commissioned a stitchery from Frances W. Robinson, an area artist who had previously created sunny tapestries for the Main Library Children's Room. The Tallmadge wall hanging of children playing in a tree was created by Robinson of applique with overcast darning.

Total materials held by Tallmadge Branch in 1993 amounted to 35,868; circulation was 176,150. The librarian was Karen Wiper.

Manchester Branch

In 1958, the East Franklin Community Council appointed a committee to seek library service for the area. The area population explosion indicated that too much patronage existed for the bookmobile service which was then provided. It took three years, but the citizens of Manchester raised \$2,394.46 to furnish and equip a branch library at 951 West Nimisila Road in the rear half of a new building being constructed as a pharmacy by A. L. Cope. The branch opened on September 24, 1961, with Ila Masters as the first librarian (she was succeeded by Marcella Teeple and Susan Rice.) The Akron Public Library paid the rent, maintained the building, provided librarian and staff, paid the utilities and provided the basic book collection. With the opening of the Portage Lakes Branch Library on July 9, 1990, at 4261 Manchester Road, Manchester Branch transferred its contents, collection, and borrowers to the new branch, and officially closed on June 23, 1990 (see Portage Lakes Branch).

Coventry Branch

The Portage Lakes Council raised \$4,500 to purchase furniture and equipment for Coventry Branch which opened on January 29, 1962, at 3515 Manchester Road in the Medical Center Building. The branch circulated 25,591 books during the first eleven months of operation; an estimated 2,000 people used the building during that first year. Barbara Schwalbach was librarian from January, 1963 to 1981 (she was succeeded by Susan Rice). As with Manchester Branch, Coventry Branch transferred its assets to the new Portage Lakes Branch when it opened. Coventry Branch closed officially on June 23, 1990. (see Portage Lakes Branch).

Mogadore Branch

Open House at the branch in Mogadore was held on October 16, 1966. The former bank building at 1 South Cleveland Avenue valued at \$65,000 was the gift of J. Frank Kemmerline, a Mogadore resident who until his death on April 3, 1972, received a yearly stipend of \$3,200 from

the Akron Public Library in payment for the property. The bank vault was never removed. Because the branch served Portage County as well as Summit County residents, the Akron Library board became the first in Ohio to provide branch service on a multi-county basis. All operating and administrative costs for the first year were paid by The State Library of Ohio, a total of \$55,200. For the next three years operating costs were shared by the Akron and Portage County libraries in increasing amounts as the federal funds decreased. Ila Masters headed the new branch.

Representatives from the Portage County District Library requested a reduction in their portion of the budget in 1976. The Portage County library's portion for the year was \$16,569 plus a \$1,000 administration fee. The request was made for a total portion of \$13,650. The Portage County District Library representatives were told that cuts would then have to be made in the book budget for the branch as the librarian there could not be paid less than other branch librarians in the Akron-Summit County Public Library system. A new budget was worked out.

Following a continuing saga of financial problems with the Portage County District Library over Mogadore, Akron-Summit County Public Library agreed to assume full operational responsibility for the branch beginning January 1, 1983. The Akron-Summit County Public Library also agreed to relinquish claims to Portage County intangibles taxes in exchange for the transfer of ownership of library materials purchased for the branch with Portage County funds. The Akron board also voted to ask for a redefinition of its service boundaries to include that part of the Mogadore Local School District which lies within Summit County. This was subsequently done when The State Library Board redefined the service area for Akron-Summit County Public Library by assigning all of the Mogadore Local School District to the Akron-Summit County Public Library. The Field Local School District was assigned to Portage County.

The library's service area then (1983) was specified as including the following school districts: Akron, Copley-Fairlawn, Coventry, East Franklin, Green, Highland (within Summit County), Mogadore, Nordon Hills, Norton, Revere, Springfield, Tallmadge, and Woodridge. Librarians who dealt with the two-county problems in addition to Masters were Rosann Anderson, Evelyn Shaw, Linda Vickery, Elizabeth Baird, and Janet Han.

Total materials held by Mogadore Library in 1993 were 24,103; circulation was 109,941. The librarian was Janet Han.

Norton Branch

Dedicated on June 19, 1969, Norton Branch opened at 4071 South Cleveland-Massillon Road in an area previously served by bookmobiles. The branch was the result of a cooperative venture between Norton Library Association, the City of Norton, and Akron Public Library. Funding to rent the branch space was raised during Norton's sesquicentennial celebration in 1968. The request for library services in Norton came at a fortuitous time because the library had just closed Firestone Branch and had available its furniture and book collection. After considerable cleaning and some remodeling, the branch opened with Rita Karlo (Mrs. Alexander) as librarian. Karlo remarked upon her retirement: "I'll never forget the first day we saw that dreadful little building and how my heart just sank right out of sight! Looks pretty good now though (in 1986)."

No sooner was the library opened than it had outgrown its facilities. After receiving permission to enlarge the building from its owner Maude Hemphill, work was begun under the direction of Bruce Ewing, C. D. Albright and Jack Charlton, members of the Norton Library Association. A room was added that almost doubled the size of the library and enabled establishment of a separate children's area. The addition was done mainly by volunteer labor and was paid for with the remaining money from the sesquicentennial fund. The addition was dedicated in December, 1972. Altogether, \$3,572.85 was spent on the project. In 1973, the front of the building which looked like a concrete block shed was remodeled under the direction of Charles Luff, again with volunteer labor. This building was officially closed on April 23, 1988, when the library moved into its new building. The Norton Library Association in 1973 changed its name to Friends of the Norton Library to more clearly indicate the purposes of the group.

In 1986, the Norton Board of Education transferred 2.7 acres on Cleveland-Massillon Road to the Akron-Summit County Public Library for a new Norton Branch. In exchange, the library agreed to pave the road to the adjacent athletic field parking lot with a minimum of four inches of black top. The library also agreed to improve a walkway from the Norton school complex to the athletic field and the branch library site.

Twenty architectural firms indicated interest in the Norton Branch construction project. Three were selected to be interviewed. Members of the board and staff viewed slides of libraries built by the three firms. Then, going with what they knew, the board chose TC Architects, the firm that designed so many Akron-Summit County Public Library buildings, as well as libraries in Twinsburg, Stow and Wayne County. The board also reasoned that, as a local company, tax dollars would remain within the county.

On May 14, 1987, the contract with TC Architects was signed and the Buildings and Grounds Committee of the board was authorized to select a design. Dominic Construction, Inc. of Boardman was designated the general contractor. Cost to build and equip the building was \$831,481. Wartko Construction Company was awarded the contract for the driveway to the Norton Athletic Field and for the branch parking lot at \$95,160. AFC Interiors received the contract for 738 square yards of carpet. The library established a \$50,000 book fund for the new branch; the sum of \$35,000 was set aside for works of art. A request to name the branch for Ernest Seiberling was refused; the board decided to continue its long-standing practice of using geographical designations. In October, 1987 footers were poured, block for the foundation was laid and a well was dug to the depth of 112-115 feet. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency tested the water and found it "acceptable."

As the first new branch library designed and built since 1971 when McDowell Branch opened, Norton Branch became reality on May 2, 1988. The 10,600 square foot building was constructed of gray brick accented with areas of turquoise glazed brick. Turquoise pillars carried the color motif inside. Constructed like a pinwheel, the building has three wings that intersect. One wing contains the juvenile area, the second houses the adult collection, and the third includes a 108 seat public meeting room and a staff work area.

The building is decorated with art works commissioned from Northeastern Ohio artists. Included are an outside sculpture titled *Rail* by Gene Kangas and an interior piece of art named

AERIALS i: Dragon Flies by Carol Adams. The building's interior designer, Julia Brachna, received first prize for designing a commercial property (the branch) from the Ohio North Chapter of the American Society of Interior Designers. Norton Branch was first in the system to open without a card catalog, using instead the computer automated on-line TLM (The Library Machine) catalog. Norton was also one of the first sites to use the TLM automated system for circulating materials. In its first eight months of existence, the branch experienced an 80 percent increase in visitors and a 79 percent increase in circulation.

Total materials held by Norton Branch in 1993 were 40,300; circulation was 140,259. The librarian was Cynthia Howe.

McDowell Branch

Following completion of the new Main Library in 1969, commitments to the residents of Bath Township to provide a library in that area had to be honored. Members of the Bath Library Association had successfully obtained a legal ruling giving them a portion of the Intangibles Tax with which to build a library. Following negotiations with Munn, the group agreed to wait until Akron Public Library could construct a building in the Bath area, at which time they would turn over their assets to APL and disband their organization. Funds for the construction had been held since 1966 to provide new quarters for the Bath Branch. With the completion of Main Library, construction of the new branch began immediately on land at 3101 Smith Road purchased from Emma Lins and Alfred and Lewinda Trockle for \$29,000. Ground was broken on the 200 x 300 foot site in December, 1970.

Bath Branch was first opened in 1964 in a house on Ira Road. The branch became a joint project of the Akron and newly formed Bath Library Boards. The library provided books and staff; Bath Volunteers for Service provided housing. In 1967 a Book Barn for children's activities was opened behind the house. When the weight of the books located in the main house threatened to collapse the floors, operations were quickly moved to Bath Elementary School.

Bringing a much-needed sparkle to the library scene about this time was Liz Carpenter, quick-witted, sharp-tongued Texan who served Lady Bird Johnson, wife of former President Lyndon Johnson, as press secretary. Carpenter spoke on March 20, 1970 to a large luncheon crowd on behalf of the Bath Volunteers. Funds raised went toward art objects for the promised Bath Branch. Carpenter, author of *Ruffles and Flourishes*, regaled her audience with tales of her time in the White House, including all the excitement caused by the Johnson daughters, Luci and Lynda.

The new branch was designed by Architect James J. Montalto and constructed by Edward Barr Corporation. Completed in 1971, the branch cost \$411,400. Its service area included not only Bath, but also Fairlawn and Copley. The building was named for C. Blake McDowell, Sr., who provided all the quarry tile for the branch. He at that time had served 39 years on the library board and was prodding the Knight Foundation to give Main Library the land at the corner of Main and Mill Streets for a park.

McDowell Branch was dedicated on December 12, 1971. Speakers at the dedication ceremony were Helen Slusser (Mrs. Richard), president of the Bath Library Board, and Frank W.

Steere, Jr., president of the Akron Public Library Board of Trustees. Following the opening of the branch, the Bath Library Board went out of business, turning over its remaining assets to Akron Public Library. Helen Stahler (Mrs. Gordon) headed the new branch; she was succeeded by Janet Han and Jill Gwinn.

Total materials held by McDowell Branch in 1993 amounted to 46,878; circulation was 261,625. The librarian was Jill Gwinn Stroud.

Green Branch

In 1978 the trustees of Green Township offered an old fire station in Greensburg as a site for a branch library, following construction of a new fire station and township building. The offer followed a survey of the community which showed that a majority of the inhabitants favored a branch over the current bookmobile service.

Green Township Clerk Roland Cormany told the Green Township trustees, Del Haefka, John Torok and Russell France, that they had no authority to remodel the fire station for library purposes using township funds. Estimates for renovation of the 1,700 square feet of space amounted to \$12,000 to fill in the large doors used by the fire trucks, level the floor, paint the area and install new lighting, carpeting and shelving.

A Friends group was quickly formed, with Elizabeth York (Mrs. Thomas) and Desire Lemoine as co-chairmen. York and her husband provided a \$4,000 interest-free loan to start the work immediately. The Board of Trustees of the Akron-Summit County Public Library provided \$4,800 in additional funds by paying two years' rent in advance. The name Green Branch Library was agreed upon, and a basic book collection and card catalog were ordered. Sharon Horwitz, who had previously served the community through the bookmobile service, was selected as branch head. The branch at 4759 Massillon Road opened on March 19, 1979 to a standing room only crowd. Dedication was held on April 29, 1979, ending a decade of planning and fund-raising by the people of Green Township, presently City of Green.

Total materials held by Green Branch in 1993 amounted to 24,955; circulation was 142,999. The librarian was Mary Miller.

Portage Lakes Branch

Manchester and Coventry Branches opened in store fronts in 1961. The population around the Portage Lakes continued to grow, offering an opportunity to add a more sophisticated branch in the area. Early in 1989 a four-acre parcel of rolling property on the east side of Manchester Road, north of State Route 619, was purchased at a cost of \$100,000. William L. Brown and the Rex Land Company were the sellers. At the same time, the library board approved the name for the branch: Portage Lakes Branch. The facility would combine Coventry and Manchester Branches and consolidate their combined collections of 27,000 materials in one attractive new building.

Robert J. Wyatt of TC Architects presented plans and a budget for the new branch. The site development budget, originally estimated at \$195,000, would cost \$215,000 because of the topography of the land and the need for an irrigation system to protect the library's investment in

shrubs and plants.

After discussion with staff and patrons, the size of the building was increased from 11,330 to 11,930 square feet to include a second small conference room. Cost of the new facility: \$1,206,055. Cavanaugh Building Corporation of Akron received the general construction contract. Ground was broken on September 15, 1989, and construction began immediately. The finished building opened on July 9, 1990, at 4261 Manchester Road. This was the second branch made possible by passage of the 0.89 mill temporary library levy in May, 1984 (Norton Branch was the first).

In keeping with the library practice of considering aesthetics as well as efficient service in library buildings, items from nine Ohio artists were included: Jean Dumer, Paula Dubaniewicz, Margot Eisemen, Joe Gordon, Carl Krabill, R. D. Rossen, Kathy Sapienza, Abigail Schermesser, and Kat Sikora. A page from the *Book of Hours* was donated by the Summit County School Media Specialists. A special grouping of photographic scenes from the early days in and around the Portage Lakes was compiled by Eloise Eberly, a library employee, with the aid of local residents. Framing was funded by the Friends of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. The building, which from the air resembles a large bird in flight, was dedicated on July 29, 1990.

Portage Lakes Branch received the 1992 Merit Award in the Landscape Architecture Design Category from the Ohio Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. Environmental Design Group did the branch's landscaping. Cited in the award was the reading garden, which provided "an intimate contemplative setting for outdoor reading and a pleasant view from inside the building, reminding one of a private, residential garden." For environmentalists, the detention basin outside the librarian's office mimicked the natural wetlands of the area. The basin bottom accommodated volunteer plants while the mowed grass slopes were planted with species natural to the area and attractive to wildlife. Glacial boulders from the property were saved and scattered at random in the basin bottom.

Total materials held by Portage Lakes Branch in 1993 amounted to 41,137; circulation was 183,876. The librarian was Susan Rice.

The Akron-Summit County Public Library did not encompass twenty branches in 1993. Firestone Branch, the very first, was closed in 1968. Manchester and Coventry Branches, opened fourteenth and fifteenth by the system, closed on June 23, 1990 when both were incorporated into Portage Lakes Branch which opened on July 9, 1990. The library system consisted in 1994 of Main Library, seventeen branches, two bookmobiles, and one van as well as the Library Express Delivery Service, a mail service for those who could not because of responsibilities in the home or for physical reasons visit the library.

Roofs

One of the major problems with all of the branches constructed with flat roofs was that their roofs leaked. Continuously. TC Architects was asked to evaluate roof problems throughout the system, then prepare bid specifications for roof repairs and replacement.

In 1979 Robert J. Wyatt, on behalf of the firm, recommended a five-year program for

maintaining branch library roofs and, in order to ensure the best price, to combine all roof repairs into a single package. Estimate for the initial repairs and the first year's maintenance was \$45,000. The board approved \$4,500 to the architects to oversee the bid process and then to follow up on the work in progress.

The bid of G&M Roofing and Sheet Metal Company of Louisville, Ohio, for \$92,180 was accepted. It included four new roofs plus maintenance and service for five years for roofs on eleven branch library buildings. Roofs to be replaced included those on Mogadore, North, Northfield and West Hill Branches.

The roof at McDowell Branch was repaired but continued to leak. In September, 1980, G&M Roofing and Sheet Metal Company was authorized to install a drain in the low part of the roof, waterproof the surrounding concrete wall, and dry out flashing in the entire area which had become waterlogged. The board instructed Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director, to get a warranty on the work. In December that same year, Reserve Roofing Company was authorized to reseal the skylight and the flashing around it at a cost not to exceed \$2,000.

Still on the subject of roofs, Stan Lero of Lero and Rollence, consulting engineers, recommended replacing the air conditioning at Kenmore and West Hill Branches with air-cooled units mounted on the roofs estimated at a total cost of \$36,000. Successful bidders for the jobs at the two branches were City Mechanical and Tersini Electric for a total cost of \$39,537. At the same time, Coffey and Radick, Ltd. of Kent was awarded the bid for maintenance and repair at eleven branches at a cost of \$119,200; Thompson Electric Company received the bid for electrical work at \$110,000. Estimated time for the repairs was four to six weeks with every effort made to keep the branches open during the repairs. In 1985 a contract was awarded to Dawkins General Contractors of Canton to replace the roof at North Branch at a cost of \$42,995. Repairs were also made on the roofs of Chamberlain, Ellet, Kenmore and Maple Valley Branches.

But the roofs continued to leak.

In 1986 Pioneer Roofing was engaged to replace the flat roof on Wooster Branch with a hip roof; mechanical and electrical work brought the total cost to \$87,975. Meanwhile, torrential rains caused considerable damage to North Branch, where installation of a hip roof was in progress. Once the roof was in place, the branch reopened with a new dropped ceiling, new lighting fixtures, and a well-scrubbed highly waxed floor - in addition to the new roof. With the development of single ply rubber membrane roofs, successful repairs were made to the flat roofs of other branches, solving their leakage problems without additional construction.

Extension And Bookmobiles

Kathryn Segee, head of Extension Services, reported to R. Russell Munn in January, 1946, that her survey of the library's stations indicated a need for closer supervision of personnel and of the book collection. The stations were far-flung: Fairlawn Sub-branch, Hillwood Homes Housing Project, Akron Jewish Center, Florence Crittenton Home, Wilbeth-Arlington Housing Project, Plumbers & Steamfitters Union Headquarters, and the Summit County Detention Home. A need for transportation was apparent at every turn. Segee recommended purchase of a book truck.

The first bookmobile unit designated "A" truck cost about \$6,000.00. Runs began on September 30, 1946 to Copley, Bath, Richfield, Northhampton, Tallmadge, Springfield, and Coventry. The budget for the service to communities and rural areas was estimated at \$259,000. Frances Worthington (later Smith) moved from West Hill Branch to provide leadership.

The second truck designated "B" truck was delivered in August, 1947 at the cost of \$3,665.00. It was smaller, and was built by Gerstenslager Company in Wooster, Ohio. With the advent of a second bookmobile, Harriet Leaf, head of children's services, and Ida Goshkin, coordinator of Group Services, visited seven summer camps where books had been left for periods of eight weeks at a time. They noted that the books were unused and untouched by the campers who were busy swimming, hiking, and earning merit badges. The women recommended a shift to bookmobile visits every two weeks which might encourage more interest and would provide books in areas where they were wanted and needed. Bookmobile service was developed for the Y. M. C. A., Girl and Boy Scout and Knights of Columbus camps, the Masonic and Catholic Service League camps, and the Camp for Crippled Children. Before sending staff members out on the roads, librarian Elinor Earle provided five three-hour sessions on reference materials so that as many questions as possible could be accurately answered. The results, according to Munn, were so excellent that the training sessions were repeated.

By 1954, Frances Worthington Smith asked for a third bookmobile which would "vastly improve our service. It would mean that many more adult stops could be scheduled, many more adult borrowers reached, while continuing school stops in the winter." The new bookmobile designated "C" truck was ordered from Gerstenslager Company and received in 1954, at a cost of \$15,811.50. An innovation in 1955 was use of microfilm charging machines for each of the by then three moving libraries. Smith left in 1956 to join the New Jersey Public Library Commission.

In 1957, Margot Jackson (Mrs. James S.) was in charge of "A" truck which was replaced in 1961 at a cost of \$16,894. Years later for the dedication in May, 1986, of a new bookmobile to replace the one purchased in 1961, Jackson wrote a tribute to that early "A" truck. It was, she remembered, "a stubby wooden-sided thing with hinged outside walls. These could be raised and locked open so that outer shelves of books were made available at the eye level of high schoolers or adults. I remember once when the latches didn't hold. As we rounded a curve, a side wall flipped open, spewing books out onto the road behind us. All had to be picked up and reshelved." In summer the bookmobiles were hot; in winter, cold. The days were long.

In 1965 "B" truck was replaced at a cost of \$14,811.50 and was also purchased from Gerstenslager Company.

By 1967, the bookmobiles were doing a brisk business in areas of Summit County without branches as well as at the Florence Crittenton Maternity Home (for unwed mothers), Belcher Senior Citizens Apartments, and Elizabeth Park housing development, hospitals, Children's Home, Juvenile Center, East Akron Community House, homes for the aged, and the Senior Citizens Center. Services expanded to the County Jail. Marie Graves (Mrs. Coburn), head of Bookmobiles and Extension who took the books to the jail herself, loaned 560 books to inmates in a single week.

In 1991, service to jail inmates changed radically. Following the construction of Summit

County's new Crosier Street jail, a small mini-branch was established there to replace services by bookmobile and van. A trained librarian, working in specially equipped space, offers 4,000 book titles and two computer terminals which provide access to the entire library collection. Another mini-branch has been requested for a new wing under construction as the jail is expanded.

Purchase of bookmobiles was sometimes hampered by unexpected problems. Hawk reported in 1980 that the Ford chassis ordered for a new bookmobile was received by Graham Ford of Akron and shipped to the Gerstenslager Company in Wooster for final assembly. At that point it was discovered that the fifty gallon gas tank was not the right shape to fit the body design. Replacement costs of \$300 were negotiated with Gerstenslager. The new bookmobile replaced "C" truck which expired at the end of 1979. The new vehicle cost \$47,436.00.

In 1986, the 1961 bookmobile costing \$16,894 was due for replacement. Its successor, purchased from Ohio Bus Sales of Canton, cost \$96,480. The new thirty-five foot vehicle, dedicated in May, 1986, featured revolving paperback and periodical shelves and an audiovisual cabinet. It could carry 5,000 books and was truly a small traveling library. This bookmobile arrived in time to celebrate forty years of traveling service to the public. It was dedicated on May 29, 1986, with proper ceremonies in front of Main Library.

In 1980, the name of the Bookmobiles and Extension Division was changed to Mobile Services to describe more accurately the services being offered to the public. For years, bookmobile activities were geared primarily to students in elementary schools. With the development of school libraries and the closing of many schools because of declining enrollment, the number of schools serviced in 1980 - twenty three - dropped to twelve in 1981. This abrupt change in one year's time allowed library personnel the opportunity to consider patrons at the other end of the age spectrum where a need for service clearly existed: with the area's senior citizens. At the suggestion of Mobile Services Head Diana Bresky Berry a van with hydraulic lift and six book carts was purchased. When loaded with library materials, the carts could be unloaded at senior citizen residences and wheeled into the senior citizens' buildings, making it unnecessary for the elderly to climb the steps into the van, thus encouraging them to browse and choose. Circulation rose four hundred percent in the first three months of service.

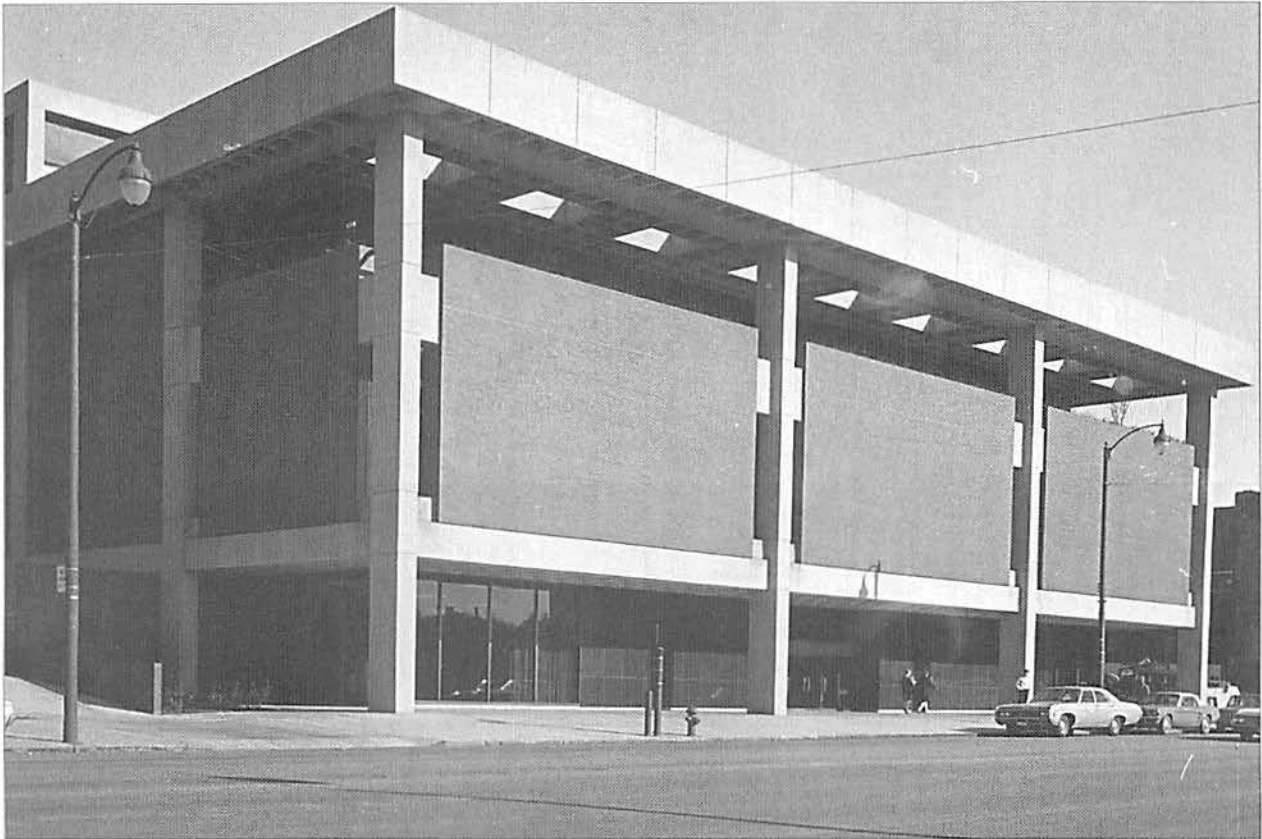
Mobile Services moved first to the sub-basement at Main Library and then out of Main Library into first-floor quarters in the building at 72 South High Street, allowing for expansion as circulation grew. By 1994, Mobile Services used the 1980 Gerstenslager bookmobile with a capacity of 3,000 items and a 1986 Bluebird with a 5,000 item capacity. The items included audiocassettes, newspapers, reference materials, non fiction, fiction, compact discs, magazines, videos, large print books, children's and young adult reading matter. Both were equipped with telephones and fax machines. Service area covered 210 square miles with a population of 294,000. During winter months the bookmobiles made, on average, thirty-four stops per week and sixty-six stops in summer. These visits were made to outlying schools in the county, neighborhoods, private day care centers, Head Start centers, pre-schools, and the Akron City Workhouse. Loan period was two weeks, and patrons had access to Main and branch collections as needed to fill reserves. Staff members also provided "lobby" service using the van with its book carts at senior citizens' buildings, staffed a small

library at the Summit County Jail, provided direct service to five hospitals and the Juvenile Center, as well as monthly rotating drop collections to nursing homes and institutions.

A service which expanded to the point where one person is needed full time to comply with the requests is the Library Express Delivery Service (LEDS). It provides library materials to readers who cannot get to a library due to physical impairment, lack of transportation, or commitments in the home which prevent visits to the library. Such patrons can request a maximum of five books, magazines, compact discs, cassette tapes and/or two videotapes which are mailed in pouches with return postage to the library enclosed.

Handling these multiple operations is a staff of fourteen full-time and four part-time persons. The circulation for Mobile Services in 1993 was 173,048. Karen Steiner was head of Mobile Services in 1993. Previous heads of Extension Services were Kathryn Segee, Frances Worthington Smith, Ronald C. Tollafield, and Marie Graves (Mrs. Coburn), Diana Bresky Berry, and Elizabeth Manderen.

Moving Main Library to Main Street



Main Library as it appeared at the time of its dedication in 1969.



Razing the buildings at the corner of Main and Mill Streets in 1971 made room for Library Park.



Roland by George Sugarman sited in 1976 is focal point of Library Park.



Workmen position *Water Venus* fountain by Robert Wick in pool in High Street Court in 1969.



Children make toy boats in a Main Children's Room craft program and sail them in the pool in High Street court.



R. Russell Munn (l.) and Frances Krieger (r.) converse with Vesta Ritzman (Mrs. A. R.) the first woman elected President of the Board of Trustees of Akron Public Library at a 1966 staff Christmas Party.



John Rebenack (l.) talks with artist Robert Morrow as the artist installs *Birth of Athena* on second floor of Main Library in 1969.



Library circulation and catalog were automated with the installation of The Library Machine (TLM) in 1984.



Sister Evangeline Doyle, O. P., puts the finishing touches on her sculpture, *The Story*, in 1981.

The Kate Clapp Garden brightens the High Street entrance to Main Library.



The Growth of Branches and Bookmobiles

(Chapter 7)



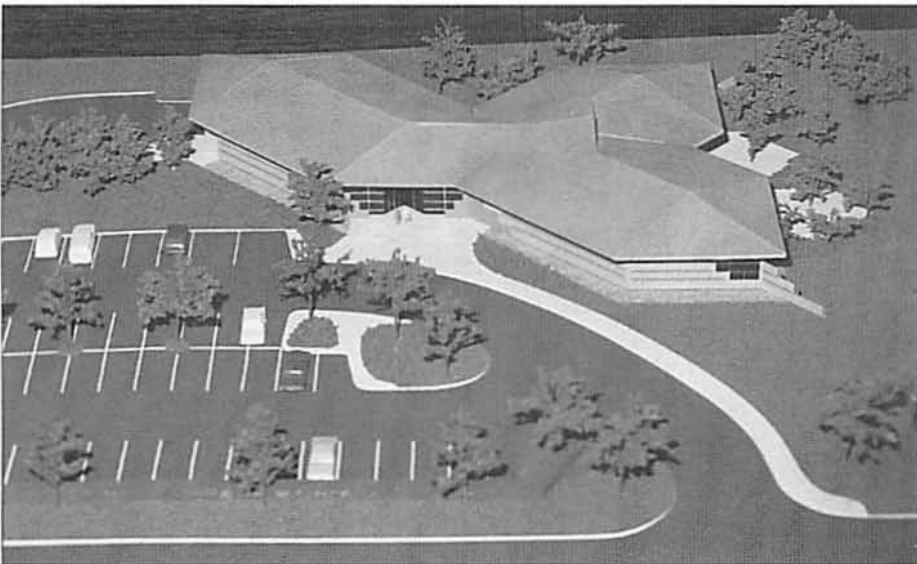
Workmen construct the roof of East Branch.



East Branch at the time it opened in 1939.



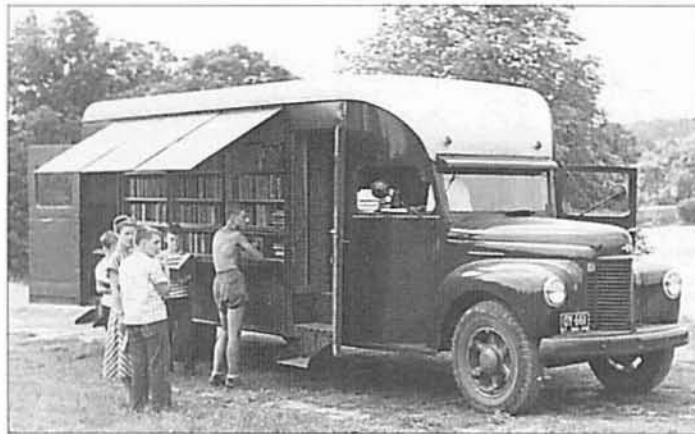
The original Norton Branch as it appeared in 1973.



A 1987 model of the new Norton Branch showing its spacious architecture and ample parking area.



The newest bookmobile features air-conditioning and storage for paperbacks and audio-visual materials. It was put into service in 1986.



The earliest bookmobile purchased in 1946 featured sides that rose to reveal the books.



The new Portage Lakes Branch at its completion in 1990.

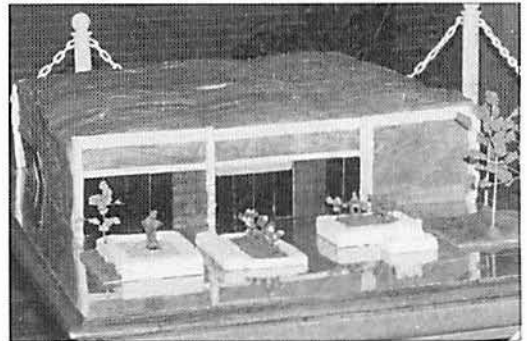
Programs (Chapter 11)



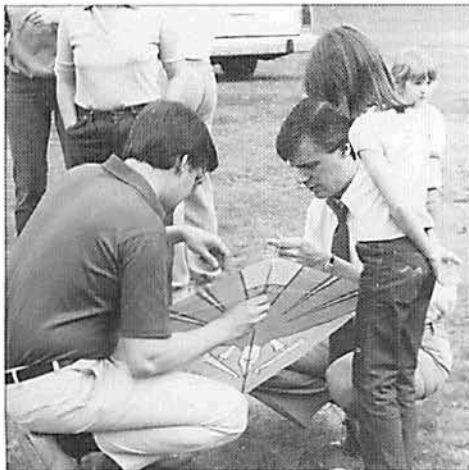
For many years the Norton Branch Dog Show was a popular event in the community.



Librarian-Director Steven Hawk (l.), Community Relations Director Patricia Latshaw (c.) accept a John Cotton Dana Honor Award for Library Public Relations from Leo Weins, president of H.W. Wilson Company in 1983.



A cake replica of Main Library highlighted the fifteenth anniversary celebration of Main Library in 1984.



Librarian-Director Steven Hawk (l.) and then-Mayor Tom Sawyer assist a kiter at the annual WAKR-ASCPL Kite Fly at Schneider Park in 1984.



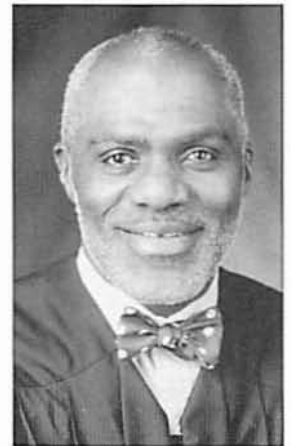
Visitors wait to share in the Bicentennial cake in 1976.



Mrs. Karl A. Dalsky (c.) serving cake to librarian Mary Ann Hoyt (l.) and Library Director John Rebenack during the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the library system in 1974.



Julian Bond (c.) initiated the Martin Luther King, Jr. Lecture Series with his talk in 1985. With him are, (l. to r.) Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director, Dr. Allen F. Killings, ASCPL trustee, Vernon L. Odom, Sr., Executive Director of the Akron Community Service Center and Urban League, and Raymond R. Brown, ASCPL trustee.



The honorable Alan C. Page, Associate Justice of the Minnesota Supreme Court delivered the 10th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Lecture in 1994.

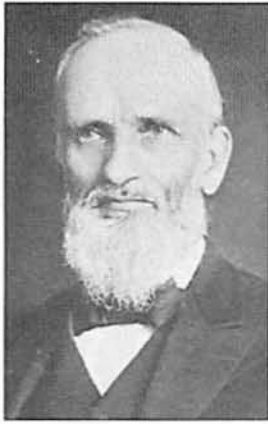


Queen Victoria (Tanya Griffith) pours tea at a Friends of the Library program at Perkins Mansion on Victoria Day in May, 1983.



Akron mayoral candidates appearing in a debate at Main Library in 1979 are (l. to r.) Roy Ray, Ronald Weyandt, Reggie Brooks, Frank Bolan and Ray Kapper.

Library Directors 1875 - 1994



Horton Wright
1875 - 1882



J. A. Beebe
1882 - 1889



Mary Pauline Edgerton
1889 - 1920



Herbert S. Hirshberg
1926 - 1929



Maude Herndon
1921 - 1926



Will Collins
1929 - 1944



R. Russell Munn
1944 - 1967



John Rebenack
1967 - 1980



Steven Hawk
1980 -

Chapter 8

Trust Funds

The earliest gift to the Akron-Summit County Public Library which continued into the 1990's came from **Thomas Rhodes** who bequeathed to the library at the time of his death his books and an unrestricted monetary gift of \$11,880.12. These funds were received by the library in 1913. Household goods were left to a niece, Edith E. Hardie, to be distributed among her brothers, sisters and cousins.

Rhodes came with his parents to the United States from Lancastershire, England in 1826; he was seven. The family settled in Sharon Township, Medina County, where they raised cattle and sheep. Rhodes stayed on the farm, raising sheep as a primary business. He retired to a home at 610 West Market Street. As a young man Rhodes was prominently identified with the Abolition party. He enlisted on October 2, 1862, in Company A, Seventy-second Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry, and served till July 30, 1863, at which time he was honorably discharged from a camp near Vicksburg, Virginia. Rhodes is not listed as a trustee of the library so reasoning behind his decision to leave his money to the library can only be guessed at - and appreciated. Remains of the Rhodes fund, about \$500, was applied to the book budget for Portage Lakes Branch at the time of its opening in 1990.

Alfred M. Barber was specific about the use of the money which he left to the library in 1914. His will stated "I give and bequeath to the Akron Public Library the sum of ten thousand dollars, which sum shall be kept safely invested by the trustees of said library and the income therefrom used for the purchase of books for said library." Both men had their wills drawn by the law firm of Commins, Brouse, Englebeck and McDowell. The latter was C. Blake McDowell, Sr., who became a trustee of the library in 1932. It is not unreasonable to think that McDowell's interest in the public library might have influenced both gentlemen to name that cultural institution in their bequests.

Barber was born in Bath Township on October 2, 1830. He moved to Akron in 1859 where he conducted an extensive grain and produce business, his transactions amounting to over \$1,500,000 a year (Lane: *Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit-County*). A self-made man who had limited educational advantages, Barber and his wife (who were childless) educated several children of relatives and were liberal contributors to churches and benevolent enterprises in the area.

In 1923, the library received a total bequest of \$46,479.26 as the result of a trust agreement between **James W. Chamberlain** and the National City Bank of Akron, Ohio. Included was cash in the amount of \$1,967.63 and stocks including B. F. Goodrich Company, both common and preferred; India Tire & Rubber Company; Northern Ohio Traction & Light Company; Star Drilling Machine Company; Wellman-Seaver-Morgan; and Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company. Use of the fund was unspecified. The library preserved this fund for educational uses, including scholarships for young people seeking master's degrees in library science. The fund also underwrites costs associated with the annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., lecture series.

In 1977, Elizabeth Ricketts (Mrs. Edward), chairman of the library board's Chamberlain scholarship committee, asked to change the offering from two scholarships at \$600 to one at \$1,200 to better assist students. The board added the contract proviso that the scholarship be considered a loan, repayable with interest, if the recipient failed to pursue a career in library science and that a transcript of grades be submitted to the committee (see appendix for winners).

Because of his generous contribution, the Firestone Park Branch which opened in new quarters in 1951 was renamed in Chamberlain's honor. Chamberlain was born in 1843 in Redfield, New York, moving as a child to Stow, then to Akron with his parents. He served an apprenticeship as a machinist, then during the Civil War enlisted in May, 1862, with Company C, 115th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, serving until June, 1865. After the war he returned to Akron, becoming superintendent of the Webster, Camp & Lane Company which later merged with the Wellman, Seaver, Morgan Company of which he became a director. He also became a director of the Williams Foundry & Machine Company, Acme Steel Company and the India Tire & Rubber Company. When he died on March 18, 1921, he was connected with the Akron Equipment Company.

Chamberlain married Emma V. Fay; they had no children. He took great interest in his apprentices and many of the boys he trained went on to high positions in the machine industry. Other beneficiaries at the time of his death besides the Akron Public Library were the Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., Children's Hospital and the Florence Crittenton Home (Karl H. Grismer: *Akron and Summit County*).

In 1976, the estate of **Nellie Baumgardner** (Mrs. Ray) provided a check for \$6,447.40 for the specific purpose of establishing and/or maintaining a branch library situated in Bath Township. This legacy was formally designated for exclusive use of McDowell Branch located in Bath Township and was used for furnishings and equipment.

Local Bath historians, Susie Shoemaker (Mrs. Robert M.) and Artha Marmaduke (Mrs. Ron), provided information about Nellie Baumgardner, who was the daughter of James and Jennie Galloway. The Galloways moved to the Hurd farm in Bath when Nellie was four years old. Nellie married Ray Baumgardner of Richfield in 1913; both were 21 years old. They had one daughter who died a day after birth. Ray Baumgardner took over his father-in-law's farm after Galloway died in 1916. He also slaughtered animals for local farmers. Ray Baumgardner died in a farm accident in 1959. After his death Nellie drove her 1969 Oldsmobile around the area, usually right down the center of the road. She and her husband were active in the Bath Grange and the Bath United Church of Christ. Nellie belonged to the Worthwhile Group, a local women's club, and the Richfield Chapter

of the Order of Eastern Star. When she died in 1975 at the age of 83, Nellie left funds from the sale of the farm to the Bath Church as well as to McDowell Library.

The sum of \$63,926.31 received in 1981 from the estate of Isabelle LeVerne Chase was used to furnish the new Richfield Branch. Her will stipulated that it had to be used by the library in five years or the money would go to a Masonic order. The legacy challenged the people of Richfield to pass a bond issue to build a new library, which they did. Community leaders agree that her legacy put the library issue over. Chase was a collector of stones and jewelry which she also bequeathed to the new library.

Jean Born, former head of Richfield Branch, supplied some information about Isabelle LeVerne Chase. Chase, who was born in Cleveland in 1899 to Emma and Grant Chase of Bath, died in October, 1978, following an auto accident as she crossed the road in front of her house. She never married. Her family was related to Seward Chase, a member of President Abraham Lincoln's cabinet. Chase herself drove an ambulance in Europe during World War II .

Thomas J. Cook on July 20, 1984, provided the Akron Public Library with \$127,812.48 "in memory and honor of" his mother, Esther Mary Cook, with the "wish that appropriate recognition of the memorial be made and that it be used for such purposes as the Governing Board determines to be in the best interests of the library."

Cook was born July 25, 1917, in Lima, Ohio, the only child of Thomas J. and Esther Mary Cook. The family moved to Columbus, Ohio, where the younger Cook graduated from Ohio State University with an engineering degree. In 1939 he moved to Akron where he was employed for twelve years by Firestone Tire & Rubber Company. He then joined B. F. Goodrich Company, from which he retired in 1977 after 27 years of service.

Cook never married. He cared for his mother until her death in 1975. Emma B. Waltermire, a long time friend of the Cooks indicated that they were voracious readers, borrowing many books per week from the library. He was a history buff with great knowledge of American and British history. His only hobby was his interest in horseracing and he went to Thistledown Race Track almost every day. Being a conservative man, his betting was limited.

Eighty-four shares of American Telephone and Telegraph stock were received by Akron Public Library on January 13, 1967, as provided in a trust agreement between the executor of the estate of Maude Herndon and Frances A. Krieger, clerk- treasurer at the time. The probable value of the estate was listed at \$4,672.50. Herndon served as the library's first children's librarian from 1913 to 1920, then as librarian until 1927. She knew the needs of the library as well as anyone. In her will Herndon left the library the AT & T stock, the net income from which was to be paid to her nephew Edward Donahue until his death. Upon Donahue's death on December 30, 1985, the income was to be used to "provide flowers for the main and branch libraries as the head librarian shall deem best" with the reminder that her first love was the Children's Room.

The 1970-71 trustee inventory listed the eighty-four shares of AT&T stock at \$1,399.94. When AT&T divested, the library received, in addition to the eighty-four shares of AT&T stock, eight shares each of Ameritech, Bell Atlantic, Bell South Nynex, Pacific Telesis, Southwestern Bell and U.S. West, Inc. The total value entered was \$7,940.28. After several conversations about the

Herndon Trust with representatives of the Summit County Prosecutor's office and the Probate Court, the decision was made in 1986 to terminate the trust. The value of the stock at that time was \$8,573.50. Three of the stocks had split. A motion to terminate the Maude Herndon Trust was filed. In September, 1987, Clerk-Treasurer Barbara Miller's final report as trustee was made to a Probate Court referee and account supervisor. The value of the stock was \$10,506.36. Two years later the Summit County Prosecutor's office again requested the value of the stock. At that time the value was \$12,879.50. The court appointed John R. Adams as Successor Trustee. The next month all stock certificates were turned over to an assistant prosecuting attorney. Through 1989-1990, dividends and stock certificates continued to go to the library which were then reported to the successor trustee. On October 10, 1990, Judge Mary F. Spicer granted John Adams' request to terminate the trust.

Termination of the trust was completed on January 29, 1991; the original stock certificates were returned to the library; and applications were ordered anticipating the odd-lot stock sale. In September, 1992, a change occurred in regard to odd-lot stock sales, and new applications were ordered. The sale of the stock was completed on January 21, 1993, for net proceeds of \$14,036.25. These funds were deposited to the Herndon Trust Fund. Instead of purchasing flowers, the funds were used to purchase BIG Books—outsize versions of children's favorites which can be used by storytellers with groups of children or by the very young. A collection of these BIG Books is circulated from Main Children's Room while thirty-five copies of each are available at each of the seventeen branches. Among titles purchased in 1993 were *Feathers for Lunch* by Lois Ehlert; *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie* by Laura Joffe; and *King Bidgood's in the Bathtub* by Audrey Wood. The books will be displayed in a cardboard carton Book House.

Clerk-Treasurer Miller remarked that "because of the nature of the trust, the Herndon Trust file has grown to be very large in twenty-seven years."

Zelle I. Taylor (Mrs. Jonathan) gave the library \$2,000 on December 18, 1944, in memory of her late husband, a prominent Akron attorney and city solicitor who died in 1936, with the proviso that the fund should be invested only in bonds issued by the United States of America or fully guaranteed obligations by the government of the United States. Interest on the fund was to be used for purchase of publications on historical and biographical subjects to be available in the library for public use. The gift continues to provide books for the Language, Literature and History Division.

Taylor was an early leader in development of the kindergarten system in Akron public schools. After graduating from Akron High School and the Louisville, Kentucky Kindergarten Training School, she returned to Akron and became one of the first kindergarten teachers in the Akron system. She was the second woman to serve on the Akron Board of Education when she was appointed in 1920. In 1922, her fellow trustees appointed her to be the fourth woman to serve on the Akron Public Library Board of Trustees, a position she held from 1923 to 1944. She was a charter member of the Garden Lovers Club and was active in the Home and School League, precursor of the Parent-Teacher Association. Taylor was the daughter of William Rowley, one of the founders of the Middlebury Clay Company. She died on January 24, 1958, at the age of 77. She and her husband had one son, Jerome Taylor, an attorney for B. F. Goodrich Company, who died on June 30, 1993.

CHAPTER 9

People In Key Positions *

Florence Q. Crellin

While the persons most noted in any discussion of the public library are the library directors, none would have been successful without a competent staff person who kept a firm hand on the money!

Florence Q. Crellin, native of Peel, the Isle of Man, Great Britain, came to the Akron area with her sister, Anne, in her teens. She began her library career, perhaps as a secretary, about 1920. She was 19 years old at the time. Long before the position of clerk- treasurer was a legal position and bonded, Crellin's work evolved into the title of Assistant Clerk-Treasurer. The Treasurer was a member of the Board of Trustees. Helen L. Pardee (Mrs. William E.), trustee from 1926 to 1945, commended Crellin as a "keeper par excellence of the records of the Library." Crellin retired in 1961 after 41 years of devoted service. Her death was recorded on December 1, 1984.

Frances A. Krieger

Florence Crellin was succeeded by Frances A. Krieger, a graduate of Banks College of Commerce. Krieger held several business and accounting positions with Firestone and General Tire & Rubber Companies, the Y. W. C. A. and Motor Cargo, Inc. Trucking Company where she worked for ten years as system paymaster. Krieger was hired because of her experience with mechanical accounting equipment, the crude and cumbersome beginnings of modern computers, which she understood and introduced to the library. Krieger bought the library's first payroll machine for \$25 from Motor Cargo, Inc. Trucking Company which delivered the massive equipment free of charge. This first machine weighed several hundred pounds and occupied a four by twelve foot area. It put an end to hand-written pay checks. At this time (1961) Krieger also bought the first accounts payable and bookkeeping machine from National Cash Register Company. Krieger personally programmed the various operations inaugurating the first automated bookkeeping system used in the library. This equipment was eventually replaced by a Burroughs system when the library moved to the new building on Main Street. The rapid development of computers demanded periodic upgrading of the library systems.

* Because they are discussed at length at the time of their appointments, library directors are not included in this section.

When Krieger joined the library in 1961, she was appalled to learn that the Clerk-Treasurer was totally responsible for any loss of funds, regardless of how the loss occurred. If a branch librarian was held up while transporting funds to the Main Library office for deposit, the clerk-treasurer, according to the then-current Ohio Library law, had to replace those lost funds from her own pocket. If some member of the library mishandled or lost funds, the clerk-treasurer was charged with replacing them. Florence Crellin had apparently replaced many lost or mishandled dollars, fortunately never very large sums, but over which she had no control. Through Krieger's persistent effort, the Ohio Library law was interpreted so that the Clerk-Treasurer was responsible for funds only after they came into her possession.

Krieger also spearheaded the effort to create a deputy clerk position in Ohio libraries. Prior to the change the clerk-treasurer was the only person authorized to handle funds, sign checks, and make transactions on behalf of the library. If the clerk-treasurer was on vacation or absent for any reason, all financial activity ceased until she returned. The change in the law provided for a new deputy clerk-treasurer, who was given the same authority as the clerk-treasurer in her absence. Krieger found there was no handbook to tell a new employee how to do the job or to tell what the law was for a library's handling of money. So she compiled and edited the *Clerk-Treasurer's Handbook for the State of Ohio* published by The Ohio Library Foundation in cooperation with the Ohio Library Association (now in its second edition.) She also wrote an article on "Personnel Records in Graphic Form" for *Office Magazine*. Krieger's tight fiscal management kept the library afloat through numerous fiscal storms. In 1971 Frances A. Krieger took office as secretary of the Ohio Library Association. In 1972 the widowed Krieger married her widower boss, John H. Rebenack. Frances A. Krieger Rebenack retired in 1977.

Barbara Miller

Barbara Miller, former Clerk-Treasurer of the Washington County Public Library in Marietta, Ohio succeeded Frances Rebenack and still holds the position of clerk-treasurer at ASCPL. A graduate of Belpre High School, Miller attended Marietta College. During her tenure the business office moved to a new location in the sub-basement of Main Library and the work of the staff was reorganized under two deputy clerks, one responsible for payroll and one responsible for accounts payable.

Carl Beery

In October, 1993, Carl Beery became public service coordinator for Branch and Mobile Services, succeeding Elizabeth Manderen. Before joining the Akron library system, Beery was assistant director of the St. Joseph County Public Library in South Bend, Indiana. Prior positions included head of extension services for the Indiana State Library in Indianapolis, supervisor of the Starved Rock Library System in Ottawa, Illinois, administrator of the City of Peru Public Library and head librarian of the Berkeley Illinois Public Library. Beery holds a bachelor of music degree from Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia, and a master of arts degree in Library and Information Science from Rosary College Graduate School in River Forest, Illinois.

Pamela Bichum Crawford

Named Personnel Director on March 4, 1991, Pamela Crawford joined the library from a position as executive director of the Canton, Ohio Y. W. C. A. She is a graduate of Cuyahoga Falls High School, with a bachelor of science degree in social welfare from Ohio State University and a master's degree in urban studies/public administration from The University of Akron. Early work experiences include case work with Fairfield County Children's Services in Lancaster, Ohio and director of Youth Services at St. Stephen's Community House in Columbus, Ohio.

In Canton, Crawford was a graduate of Leadership Canton, a member of the Junior League Community Advisory Board, Stark County Housing Task Force, Committee for Youth and Families, and Columbus Youth Movement Task Force. After coming to Akron, she became 1993 legislative chairperson for the Akron Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Managers.

Margaret J. Dietz

Margaret J. Neumann Dietz (Mrs. Richard H.) joined the Ayres Branch Library staff as a library aide in 1963. When Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.) left the position of head of Publicity/Display (now the Community Relations Department) in 1966, Dietz succeeded her as head of the department and editor of *The Owlet*. Dietz left the library in 1974 to become Public Information Officer and Director of the Office of Communications for the then-newly established Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine in Rootstown, Ohio.

Dietz was a 1946 graduate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and received a master of science degree in 1949 from Columbia University (New York) School of Journalism. During her tenure, the Akron library moved into its Main Street building. She served as president of the Staff Association from 1969 to 1970.

Thomas DuFore

Thomas DuFore graduated from Westminster College magna cum laude in 1976. He was awarded the Chamberlain scholarship to study for a master of library science degree at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Pittsburgh, from which he graduated in 1977. He continued his education while he worked at Akron-Summit County Public Library, receiving his Juris Doctor in 1983 from the School of Law of The University of Akron.

DuFore joined the staff of the Akron-Summit County Public Library in June, 1977, as a Librarian I in Fine Arts and was promoted to Librarian II in the same agency in 1977. He transferred to Group Services in 1978 and was progressively Librarian III, Film Coordinator and finally AV Librarian. In 1984 he was appointed Personnel Director, a position he held until 1986 when he left to join the personnel staff of a hospital in Arizona.

Mary Elizabeth Earle

Mary Elizabeth Earle came to Akron Public Library in 1954 as head of the catalog department. In 1964, she was named Assistant Librarian in charge of Technical Processes, the position from which she retired in 1978. Earle was a graduate of the University of Kentucky in

Lexington and received the master's degree in library science from the University of Illinois Library School at Urbana. Her career as librarian began at Kings Mountain High School in the Kentucky town of the same name. She served as reference assistant, cataloger, and extension librarian at the Kentucky State Library. Between 1943-1944 she was the librarian for the Army Library Service at Damall General Hospital in Danville, Kentucky. Coming to Ohio, she served as librarian of the Zanesville Public Library, as head of the catalog department at Lima Public Library, and subsequently as head of cataloging for the Akron Public Library. Earle and her sister, Elinor (head of Kenmore Branch Library) were daughters of a civil engineer; the family went wherever the father's work took them. Both Earle sisters took a keen interest in genealogical studies. Mary Elizabeth was a member of both the local and state genealogical organizations, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Daughters of American Colonists. Mary Elizabeth Earle died on September 19, 1992.

Virginia Goddard Farmer

When Virginia Farmer (Mrs. Jack) retired on March 15, 1975, she closed the book on thirty-two years of service to Ohio libraries. Of those, twenty-five were spent at Akron-Summit County Public Library. A graduate of Mount Union College in Alliance, Ohio, and of Carnegie Library School, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1942, Farmer held library positions in Lima, Ohio, and Cleveland Heights, Ohio, before coming to Akron in 1950 to head Main Children's Room. She served as coordinator of work with children from 1957-1975. Her title became Coordinator of Children's Services in 1959. In 1970 she was a member of the Newbery-Caldecott selection committee, reading all of the children's books published during that year. Farmer died almost immediately after retirement on January 28, 1976. One year later, the story hour room in the Main Library children's area was designated the Virginia Goddard Farmer Room in her memory.

Laurel Fischer

Laurel Fischer (Mrs. Sy Louis) received a bachelor of philosophy degree from the University of Chicago and a master of arts degree from Kent State University. She began her library career in 1948, working at East and Ellet Branches, then becoming children's librarian at Ayres Branch. In 1967 she succeeded Evelyn G. Cage at Wooster Branch after Cage's death. As head of Wooster Branch, Fischer administered a two-year State Library of Ohio Books/Jobs Program used in sensitivity training for those working with the unemployed and underemployed. She and her assistant, Alice Perkins, (now Alice Wilson, children's assistant at Wooster Branch) walked a grocery cart filled with discarded library paperbacks down Wooster Avenue, giving away the books and urging those on the streets to come to the library to read and to participate in the library's program.

Fischer became coordinator of Group Services in 1970, the position from which she retired in 1984. Always an active participant in library and Staff Association activities, Fischer presented Jewish recipes from her repertoire during the library's 1973 cooking series at East Ohio Gas Company.

Ida Goshkin

A job as cataloger brought Ida Goshkin to the Akron Public Library in 1930. When Group Services was organized in 1944 she became its coordinator. She started Great Books discussions which flourished yearly; in 1951 she was granted a leave of absence to become field director of the American Heritage project of the American Library Association for the promotion of adult discussion programs on the American heritage and its contemporary applications. Her activities in the community were numerous and in 1959 she received the Brotherhood Award for her work with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the Akron Community Service Center and Urban League. She was also chairman of the Akron Council on Human Relations.

Miss Goshkin was born in Russia. She received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Wisconsin and a master of science degree from the Columbia University School of Library Science. She worked as a cataloger for the Racine, Wisconsin Public Library before joining the staff of the Akron Public Library. Miss Goshkin retired in September, 1967, and immediately left the area to travel in Greece and Italy.

David Jennings

David Jennings was appointed public service coordinator for Main Library in 1990 as a result of administrative streamlining. A graduate of Kent State University with a bachelor's degree in American studies and a master's degree in library science, he served as a reference librarian in the Information Division, as head of Wooster Branch, and head of Business, Labor and Government Division.

Patricia H. Latshaw

A graduate of Principia College, Elsah, Illinois, Latshaw (Mrs. George) has a master's degree from the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. degree from the University of Iowa. She has been director of Community Relations for Akron-Summit County Public Library since 1974, editing first the *Owlet*, then its successor, *Insight*. Under her guidance, the library received the prestigious John Cotton Dana award in 1983 for library public relations. A longtime member of the Ohio Library Association, she served as president in 1992.

Elizabeth Manderen

Elizabeth Manderen joined Akron-Summit County Public Library in June, 1980, as a children's librarian in Main Children's Room. She was also children's librarian at Maple Valley and Ayres Branches. She became head of West Hill Branch in 1983; from 1988-1990 she was the head of Mobile Services. Her varied experiences made her a natural for the new position of public service coordinator for Branch and Mobile Services when the administration was streamlined in 1990.

Manderen is a native of Fort Campbell, Kentucky. She attended high school in London, England, and Ann Arbor, Michigan. She received a bachelor's degree in art history from Oberlin College and a master's degree in library science from Case Western Reserve University. Manderen

left the library on July 2, 1993, after thirteen years of commuting from Oberlin, Ohio, her home. She was subsequently named executive director of the Oberlin-based Firelands Association for the Visual Arts.

Dennis V. Mulvey

Dennis V. Mulvey was Librarian-Assistant Director, Branch and Mobile Services from October 11, 1982 to December 8, 1989. A graduate of the State University of New York at Buffalo, he held a Bachelor of Arts degree in Philosophy and Religion and a Master of Science in Library Science degree from that institution. Before coming to Akron-Summit County Public Library he had served as a librarian at the Rockford Public Library in Rockford, Illinois and Assistant Director of the Warren-Trumbull County Public Library in Warren, Ohio. During his tenure as assistant director, numerous Friends groups developed in branch libraries and The Library Machine (TLM) came on-line in branch libraries. He resigned in 1989 to head a system in Pennsylvania.

Curtice G. Myers

Curtice G. Myers (Mrs. Park), a native of Akron, graduated from North High School. She received a bachelor's degree from The University of Akron and a library science degree from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Myers joined the Akron Public Library staff in 1936 as a page while a student at The University of Akron. She left in 1939 to study in Illinois. Before returning to Akron she held positions at the University of Illinois Library, Kent State University, and as a teacher-librarian in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Myers returned to Akron in 1947 and rejoined the Akron Public Library staff as an assistant in the General Reference, Science and Technology Division, becoming its head that same year. She held that position in the Summit Street library from 1947 to 1951, took time off to rear a pre-school son, and returned in 1957. In 1969 she became head of Science and Technology Division in the new Main Library on Main Street. Myers was appointed Librarian-Assistant Director in charge of branches and personnel in July, 1974. She retired in 1979 after twenty-six years with the library. Myers was known for her insatiable curiosity and her ability to uncover obscure facts in response to arcane questions.

Mary F. Ness

A native of Minnesota, Mary F. Ness (Mrs. Harold) received a bachelor of science degree from the University of Minnesota, working in the field of retail merchandising while her two daughters were in school. She returned to Case Western Reserve University where she received the master of library science degree. She worked as children's librarian at Maple Valley Branch and in the Cuyahoga County and Euclid Library systems during the 1960's. She was named assistant coordinator of Children's Services in Akron in 1970, becoming coordinator in 1975. She retired in 1982.

Judith Campbell Rosenberg

Appointed Youth Services Coordinator in 1992, Judith Rosenberg has served in many positions in the Akron library system. She joined the staff in 1968 as children's library assistant at Ayres Branch. After completing a master of library science degree at Kent State University, she was promoted to children's librarian at Ayres. She left the system in 1974, returning in 1981 as children's librarian at Chamberlain Branch. In 1982 Rosenberg became Kenmore Branch librarian. She was named Youth Services Coordinator in January, 1992. She is author of *Young People's Books in Series, Fiction and Non-Fiction, 1975-1991* published in 1992 by Libraries Unlimited of Englewood, Colorado.

Richard Rubin

Richard Rubin was the first full-time Personnel Director of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. A graduate of Oberlin College, Oberlin Ohio in 1971, he attended the University of Bristol, England from 1972-73. He received a master of library science degree from Kent State University in 1976. Rubin joined the staff of Akron-Summit County Public Library as a Librarian II in Language, Literature and History in 1977. He was promoted to Personnel Director in 1980, remaining in that position until 1984, when he left to pursue a doctor of philosophy degree in library science which he received from the University of Illinois, at Champaign-Urbana in 1987.

During his tenure, the Employee Handbook was expanded, practices regarding job posting, interviews, appointments and promotions were clarified and standardized, and the annual In-Service Day was developed.

He has been a member of the faculty of the Graduate School of Library Science at Kent State University since 1987.

Cynthia Sabula

Cynthia Sabula received a bachelor of arts degree in psychology in 1979 and a master of arts degree in counseling in 1987 from The University of Akron. She joined the library staff as Personnel Director in March 1987 and served until 1991. Prior to joining the library, Sabula was Associate Executive Director/Personnel at Goodwill Industries of Akron, Ohio Inc.

Luanna Stahlecker

Luanna Stahlecker was assistant librarian in charge of Main Library when she retired on October 31, 1977. With her at all times were a yellow note pad and a purple ballpoint pen to help her keep track of problems to be solved at Main Library. She was succeeded by Steven Hawk. Stahlecker had worked with Akron Public Library since 1952 when she entered the system as a senior librarian in the old Adult Services Division. She became head of Adult Services in 1954 and Assistant Librarian for Main Library in 1967 just in time to plan for the move into new quarters.

Stahlecker received a bachelor of science degree from Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, and a library science degree from the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. She directed the Education-Philosophy-Psychology Library and was later supervisor of departmental libraries

and assistant librarian at the University of Iowa in Iowa City. She also did graduate work in psychology at that university.

Stahlecker and her husband, Dr. Lotar Stahlecker, emeritus Professor of Special Education at Kent State University, travel widely and share their excursions into remote corners of the world through travel talks with many audiences, often in libraries. She collects fans and ornamental necklaces during her travels, exhibiting the former and wearing the latter with great aplomb. She and her husband share their home with many foreign students who come to Kent through the International Students' Organization.

Ronald C. Tollafield

When he left Akron Public Library in 1974 to direct the Medina Public Library in Medina, Ohio, Ron Tollafield was serving as assistant librarian in charge of personnel, branches and extension services. He joined the Akron library in 1953, was named head of Firestone Branch in 1957, head of Extension Department at Main Library in 1959, and assistant librarian in 1969. Before his retirement in 1985, Tollafield supervised the renovation of the Medina Public Library as well as construction of an addition to the building. He was also instrumental in computerizing library systems there. A Medina native, Tollafield held bachelor's degrees from Ohio Wesleyan University at Delaware and Western Reserve University in Cleveland. He received the master of library science degree from the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign.

Evelyn McKinstry Wagner

Eve Wagner (Mrs. Richard S.) graduated from Akron's Buchtel High School and The University of Akron. She received the master of library science degree from Carnegie Library School in Pittsburgh. Wagner joined the Akron Public Library in 1949 as a page, and was later awarded the Chamberlain Scholarship to help finance her library degree. She returned from graduate school, working as a children's librarian at both North and Kenmore Branches in 1954. She moved to Main Children's Room in 1964, to West Hill Branch as children's librarian in 1969, and was promoted to head of West Hill Branch in 1972. Wagner succeeded Margaret Pollock as head of Main Children's Room in 1976. In 1982 she became Coordinator of Children's Services, retiring in 1991.

Lynnette Winemiller

Lynnette Winemiller (Mrs. Frederick D. Jr.) graduated from Kent State University and received her library degree from Columbia University. She joined the staff of Akron Public Library in 1959 as a librarian in the order and catalog department, remaining with that department when it became Technical Processes after the move to the new Main Library. She was promoted to Librarian IV in 1975 and became head of Technical Processes in 1978. She retired from the library in 1982. She died on November 3, 1989.

Olga Yogmour

Olga Yogmour became head of Main Library and Librarian-Assistant Director of the Akron-

Summit County Public Library on September 3, 1979, following the retirement of Curtice G. Myers. Yogmour began her career in May, 1952, as a page in the Adult Services Division of Main Library. Following graduation from The University of Akron in 1958, she continued as a part-time library aide in that division. Between 1958 and 1960 she taught at Newberry School and later at Bolich Junior High School. In 1961, she entered Case-Western Reserve University Library School, receiving a master of library science degree in 1962. She took a position during this time at Bierce Library at The University of Akron, returning to Akron Public Library in 1967 in the Science and Technology Division. In 1971 she was appointed head of Fine Arts and Music.

Chapter 10

Services

From the days of Edwin P. Green who in 1866 was appointed the first librarian for the Akron Library Association, SERVICE has been the watchword. Green's mandate was to supervise the collection, keep the rooms clean and ventilated, and to keep the library open six days a week (never on Sunday). The ability to fulfill the needs of patrons was the constant concern of all librarians from Green through the years to Steven Hawk, current Librarian-Director.

R. Russell Munn, in his final report to the Board of Trustees in 1967, may have said it best: "It has been a tradition in libraries that expert, courteous service is paramount. Nobody has ever entered the profession of librarianship to get rich. Librarians have been dedicated almost entirely to the interests of their institutions and to their improvement." He continued that the public library serves people of all ages, in school or out. The library is a place where students are encouraged to explore areas of knowledge not included in their class work; and where facts and figures on all subjects are available to assist in the solution of thousands of problems.

A way to improve service, a change in the way books were borrowed, occurred in 1958. Up to that date, charge-outs had been done by hand. Following installation of a charge-a-plate method of recording book loans at Main Library, the system was extended to Ellet, Maple Valley, Chamberlain and West Hill Branches in 1959, with the change-over completed in all branches by 1960. Members of the Golden Age Club volunteered many hours in mailing the thousands of new borrowers' cards.

In April 1974, the library joined the Ohio College Library Center (OCLC), making possible the computerization of book cataloging. Through a terminal located at Main Library, workers added to and tapped into information stored in a computer located in Columbus, Ohio. The computer program printed bibliographic data from the Akron library collection as well as those of several hundred other libraries nationally. The system also produced catalog cards in final filing form supplied from the Library of Congress. Between sixty and a hundred books a day could be cataloged with the new system, which was infinitely better and less expensive than typing each catalog card separately. The OCLC system worked wonderfully when it was feeling healthy. In the beginning it had many down days!

Interlibrary loans were becoming more and more popular after installation at Main Library

of the Teletype Interlibrary Loan Network (TWX) which connected the Akron library with public libraries in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown as well as with the Ohio State University libraries. Over the years the volume of inter-library loans has continued to increase.

During 1976, the inventory of library holdings was computerized, enabling better control of the collection which was then valued at \$5,600,000. A Library Services and Construction Act grant was secured to microfilm the entire retrospective catalog. With all library holdings on computer, the next step was a computerized charging system. Putting the official file on microfilm was done by the Ohio Library College Center, thus not upsetting the daily local library routine in any way. County librarians were at the same time working on a proposal for a single charge system for the entire county.

Once computerization took hold, there was no stopping its spread. The Summit County Council of Governments arranged for a computer terminal in the Business, Labor and Government Division to access data from the Federal Domestic Assistance Program Retrieval System (FAPRS). Five organizations, including United Way of Summit County, set up deposit accounts of \$150 each to handle user charges. The program ended in May, 1979.

A new computer network named OHIONET, consisting of Ohio libraries belonging to the Ohio College Library Center, was formed when OCLC became a national corporation. The library continued its membership in OCLC through the new network. OHIONET, an automated circulation control system, was approved with the hope that the other six libraries in Summit County would join, making the system compatible for all. The Akron library's fiscal involvement in OHIONET was \$32,500 for systems equity and \$6,200 for equipment, plus the cost of telecommunications.

Beginning in 1978 the library served as resource center for the Central Ohio Information Network (COIN) responding in that year to 89 questions for an average of 69 minutes of research. The library was reimbursed at the rate of \$6.09 per question. Akr-On-Line came to the library in 1981. The on-line reference service opened to the public on January 2, ushering in a new era of information retrieval. Funds for start-up of the service came from The State Library of Ohio authorized under the federal Library Services and Construction Act.

Computer services proliferated beginning in 1982 and 1983. So did the alphabet designations. The library applied for and was awarded two Title I, Library Services and Construction Act grants by The State Library of Ohio to see what the public reaction was to several new services. The first grant was for the Project for Audio Visual Expansion and Delivery (PAVED), awarded for 1982-83, which allowed the library to expand its collection into new formats to provide for the educational, informational and recreational needs of the public. Since Akron-Summit County Public Library's patrons had indicated great interest in video cassettes, the PAVED funds added 1,300 video cassettes to the library collection. Two video cassette players were purchased. Because of patron interest, service between Main Library and branches was upgraded to daily delivery service, all with PAVED funds.

The second federal project, Computer Assisted Learning in Libraries (CALL), awarded for 1983-84 was used to purchase TRS-80 computers for patron use at Main Library and 12 branches.

In 1983 such computers were of limited availability to much of the adult population; the library computers allowed patrons to acquire basic computer literacy skills. The BASIC program language was capable of creating music, managing personal finances and playing chess or checkers.

In May of 1983 a new computer system was installed in the Business Office. Payroll was the first business function converted to the new equipment.

In October, 1983, the Akron, Stow and Cuyahoga Falls public libraries agreed to develop a computer-based circulation control and on-line catalog system for their mutual use. This decision sounded the death knell for the card catalog developed by Sara Nelson in 1890 when she classified the library's collection in the Masonic Temple on Mill and Howard Streets. Problems in development of The Library Machine (TLM) soon reached a critical point and the three libraries agreed that the entire system should be moved to Akron's Main Library as quickly as possible in the best interests of its development. To facilitate TLM's progress, Stow Public and Taylor Memorial Libraries relinquished their proportionate equity in the system in return for free access to the system equal to their fiscal and in-kind contributions. Thus the Akron-Summit County Public Library became sole owner of all the TLM computer hardware, software, accompanying peripherals and telecommunications network devices. In return, the Akron library agreed to provide TLM services to the two county libraries at reasonable cost.

Delivery of The Library Machine equipment and software was made in June, 1985. The three libraries tested the on-line catalog aspect during that summer with the goal of making the on-line catalog available to cooperating libraries by that autumn. All the computer equipment to operate The Library Machine was installed in the library's sub-basement in 1985 until such time as the building at 72 South High Street was renovated. Plans were to move the computer center to the third floor of that building.

Bar code labels were inserted in all library materials at Main Library as the first step to use of The Library Machine as a catalog and as a means of charging out materials. The new automated catalog became available on The Library Machine on April 19, 1988, at Main Library. Later TLM became available to the public at seven branches as well as at Main. Bar coding the collection proceeded in orderly fashion and was completed in early 1989. By the end of 1989, The Library Machine was available for use at Main Library and in all branches.

In 1987, Stow Public Library began using the TLM circulation function in which that library and Taylor Memorial Library in Cuyahoga Falls had originally invested. Taylor Memorial Library had yet to go on-line. A year later in 1988, Taylor Memorial Library withdrew its TLM participation, requesting its data base in machine-readable format. At the same time, Stow City Schools signed a TLM contract with Akron's library, similar to the one signed by Stow Public Library.

Four TLM libraries: Akron-Summit County Public Library, Toledo-Lucas County Public Library, Wood County District Public Library, and Morley Library of Painesville formed a not-for-profit corporation to market TLM outside Ohio. In 1988 the library joined with 122 other public libraries in Ohio to participate in the Libraries of Ohio Access Network (LOAN), which provided walk-in borrowing privileges to any resident of Ohio. To take library service into the twenty-first century, the library in 1993 received a grant to study public phone access to The Library Machine.

Awarded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the \$10,000 grant was to develop dial-access capability to the computerized catalog of the library's holdings. The service would be available to library card holders in 1994.

In 1980 the library joined INFO, a federally supported multi-county cooperative library program established to improve service which had been in operation in Lorain and Medina counties since 1970. Doris Jyurovat, director of Stow Public Library, was named county representative to the enlarged INFO board. Contracts were approved with Stow Public Library and Kent Free Library for the purchasing and processing of their books. The Akron library charged a processing fee of \$2 per book for the service.

In 1974 newly microfilmed copies of the *Akron Beacon Journal* for the period of 1841-1939 were added to the library collection. All existing original copies of the newspaper were photographed to produce a new film to replace the badly deteriorated file which has been produced by the Works Progress Administration in the late 1930's. Costs were shared among The University of Akron, the *Akron Beacon Journal*, the Ohio Historical Society, and the Akron library, all of which received copies of the film when production was completed.

Back issues of *The Reporter*, newspaper for the local African-American community, were microfilmed by Akron-Summit County Public Library in 1984 in cooperation with The University of Akron. Nine reels of film covered editions from the first issue on October 11, 1969, through November 5, 1983. Microfilm of the 1850 census was presented to the Language, Literature and History Division that same year by the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society. The 1850 census continues to be of great value to genealogical researchers because it was the first to list all the members of a household.

A Cooperative Film Center was set up in 1975 with \$47,350 from the Library Services and Construction Act which allowed the Akron-Summit County Public Library and Bierce Library at The University of Akron to merge the film collections of both institutions into one to benefit faculty and students at the university as well as the general public. The Center was located at Main Library and supervised by Group Services. The library and university also joined in presenting seminars on "Planning and Public Policy in the Regional Setting" through a grant from the Ohio Program in the Humanities and the Departments of Sociology and Urban Studies at the university. The center closed in the 1980s when the university bowed out of the arrangement.

Widening the area of service, a contract was signed in 1975 with Medina County District Library providing free reciprocal service for Medina and Summit County residents. Space was also granted to the Area Office on Aging for volunteers to register persons 60 years or older for Golden Buckeye identification cards. These could be presented by the elderly for discounts at participating businesses.

In an effort to better serve the deaf community, a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD) machine was installed at Main Library in 1977 through the cooperation of Tele-Deaf and Ohio Bell Pioneers. Located at the switchboard, the device was activated by a special telephone number, making reference service to the hearing impaired a reality. Deaf callers did request library information, but switchboard operators provided other kinds of service too. They made and

cancelled appointments, ordered storm windows, made travel arrangements, and contacted the *Akron Beacon Journal* on behalf of a couple celebrating a fiftieth wedding anniversary. Friends of Akron Summit-County Public Library paid for the first year's service. By the second year use of the deaf network had jumped 28 percent indicating an unmet need being provided by the library. The library's unit was one of the first available in Summit County. As other local agencies added TDDs, most of the non-library use of the service disappeared.

A special gift of historical interest to the community was given to Business, Labor and Government Division by Peggy J. Prowell Russell in 1975. Russell presented the papers, photographs and tapes accumulated by Sherrill E. Leonard and Everett H. Russell concerning development of the trucking industry which she used in writing a history titled *The Motor Wagons*, a copy of which she also presented to Business, Labor Government Division. The Pioneer Motor Traffic Club provided funds to build a further collection of the history, development, and operation of the trucking industry, one of the area's major employers. Frances A. Krieger, who worked for Motor Cargo before joining the library, remembered that the company had begun by delivering coal in winter. To keep the trucks, which were painted purple and named Bertha, Belinda, and Beulah, busy in summer, the company began delivering ice, then moved into other kinds of transport.

Library maintenance was studied when Lero & Rollence, engineers, presented plans to make some changes and modifications in the heating, air conditioning and ventilating system at Main Library to conserve a considerable amount of energy at a sizeable reduction in utilities expense. Their 1976 study cost the library \$3,900 taken from the Permanent Improvement Fund. Lero estimated that revamping the system would cost about \$15,600 but would produce a saving of \$31,454 per year. The board approved.

The wisdom of this decision became apparent during the winter of 1977-78 when northeastern Ohio suffered the century's coldest winter weather and greatest snowfall on record to that date. Shortages of natural gas and coal created crisis conditions. The inability to move coal from barges frozen in the Ohio River led to shortages of electric power. The need to conserve electricity caused shortened library hours at Main with evening hours eliminated for the month of March. Branch hours were rearranged. By April the worst was over. Perhaps because people had to stay at home, the number of registered borrowers increased to 147,562, the highest recorded total in the library's history to that time. Of that number, 74.3 percent were adult borrowers and 25.7 percent were children under twelve years of age.

Savings were in everyone's thoughts in 1977. A library-owned telephone system was purchased and installed to reduce operating costs at Main Library. The equipment, supplied by Electronic Engineering Company, cost \$47,761. Savings to the library of \$3,000 per year were expected following repayment of the loan from First National Bank of Akron. By January, 1994, all 762 exchange lines were full. Norstan Communications, Inc. of Brecksville got the \$187,000 contract to install a new phone system, to be operative in April, 1994. To accommodate more lines Main Library numbers started with a new exchange, 643, and calls could be dialed directly to an employee's phone.

New computerized typesetting equipment for the library's Community Relations Depart-

ment was purchased in 1981 from A. B. Dick Company. The new equipment made it possible for library personnel to set type for publications in as many as 30 different type faces and 18 type sizes. Previously, all type for library publications had been set on a typewriter or purchased from a commercial typesetting firm. The new equipment became necessary after the library made its 1980 summer reading club materials available to all the libraries in the state on a trial basis through The State Library of Ohio. The materials were used happily by 202 libraries throughout the state. The joint venture to develop and produce the graphics and print pieces for the Statewide Summer Reading Club continued until 1990. In 1990 the typesetting equipment was upgraded further to a PC computer based system.

In 1986 the library publication, *The Owlet*, was renamed *INSIGHT*. Patricia Waldron, hired in 1948 by R. Russell Munn, had established library public relations on a solid footing with community and area media. Her successor, Elizabeth O' Kane, originated *The Owlet* in 1960. Following O' Kane sequentially as directors of public relations and as editors of library publications were Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.) in 1963, Margaret J. Dietz, (Mrs. Richard H.) in 1966, and Dr. Patricia Latshaw (Mrs. George) in 1974.

Warren Skidmore, head of Language, Literature and History Division, worked with the Summit County Historical Society in 1984 to bring back to Akron the "Gold Rush" diary of Samuel A. Lane. The writing of the former Akron sheriff, mayor, journalist and historian, came to light through a Texas book dealer. Lane was the author of *Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County*, the definitive history of the area. Helping to defray the cost of \$7,500 to return the diary to Akron were the *Akron Beacon Journal*, Cuyahoga Falls Historical Society, Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, General Tire Foundation, B. F. Goodrich Company, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company, Knight Foundation, Charles E. and Mable M. Ritchie Charitable Foundation, Sisler-McFawn Trust, and sixty-six individual donors. Contributions amounted to \$11,000; the excess was used to publish the diary.

Vu-Text, the computer-based index to the *Akron Beacon Journal* and other newspapers published between 1985 and 1993, was added to reference services. On January 1, 1994, the index was absorbed into *Dialogue*, another on-line computer-based data base. Other services provided through levy money included microfiche reader-printers for Main Library. And subscriptions to two magazine services: one for magazine collections and one for business collections. Cost of the two was \$44,100. Mobile Services began Library Express Delivery Service to provide library materials by mail to people unable to visit the library.

The position of film coordinator within Group Services, begun in the early days of R. Russell Munn's tenure at the library, was evolving with increased responsibility as public interest in film expanded in all directions. By 1982, Beta and VHS cassettes were available for borrowing. Thomas DuFore, former Chamberlain scholar, was selected to choose, plan, train, and administer the developing area. Until the building at 72 South High Street would be ready for use, the new Audio Visual Services Division was opened in the second floor area formerly housing Group Services. Patrons were able to browse through shelves of video cassettes to make their selections. Circulation skyrocketed: 955 titles were checked out in one day. In 1985 circulation increased overall by 5.2

percent. The name of Group Services, begun in 1944, was officially changed in 1986 to Audio Visual Services with Richard Ewing as head. At the same time, Fine Arts and Music Division became Fine Arts and Recreation Division.

An allocation of \$15,600 in 1985 from the State Library of Ohio matched an in-kind contribution from Akron-Summit County Public Library to purchase materials for the Adult New Reader project. Book collections of easy-to-read material for adults wishing to increase their reading skills were developed for Main Library and the branches. The project was begun in cooperation with the Summit County Adult Literacy Council Project: LEARN (Let Every Adult Read Now) which matched adult tutors with adult non-readers to teach illiterate adults how to read. Helen Stahler (Mrs. Gordon), retired head of Maple Valley and McDowell Branches, began Project: LEARN in 1980 in her basement recreation room. When Barbara Norton (Mrs. Robert) became executive director of Project: LEARN in 1989, the library offered a portion of first floor space in its building at 72 South High Street to the program at \$100 a year rent. The space gave the program a place for training instructors and meeting areas for tutors and their adult new readers.

In 1985 broadcast space was provided to Written Communication Radio Service (WCRS) in the sub-basement of Main Library. The radio reading service for the blind and visually impaired broadcast over a sub-channel of WKSU, public radio station operated through Kent State University. Marcia Jonke was executive director. Rental for the space was \$200 a month. In 1990 the service was unable to pay its rent on time. The Akron library considered assuming its services. That fell through when the director, Marcia Jonke, stated that the library would have to assume the agency's outstanding debts, which included salary owed the director, as well as purchase of the existing equipment. The minimum figure for such a buy-out was \$300,000. Since the library could not legally assume the WCRS financial obligations, it agreed that the agency could stay until April 15, 1990, so that new space could be sought. In May, WCRS was still in the basement - with no payment of additional rent. A hearing was set for June 6 in Municipal Court regarding the agency's eviction. By July, WCRS was out of the sub-basement. The board agreed that a letter to the director was appropriate, wishing the agency well and forgiving the rent owed for May, June and July.

In 1986, Main Library received equipment for a television studio for public access use by non-profit organizations. Warner Amex Cable Communications, Inc., and the City of Akron provided the equipment to be housed in a new TV studio when the library's expansion program into the building at 72 South High Street should be complete. In 1993 the equipment was housed near the Munn Auditorium on the third floor and used regularly to tape programs for the Warner local access channel.

In 1953, the Akron Public Library became a Depository Library for publications by the United States Government. That designation assured constant updating of printed governmental materials without cost to the library. Government contract information not available through Depository Library publications became available to area businesses on April 9, 1987, when the Government Contract Information Collection was opened. The collection provided specifications and standards needed for contract compliance for current government contracts of both civilian and military agencies. Developed in cooperation with Charles Way, director of the Small Business

Development Center of the Akron Regional Development Board, the collection assisted local companies in gaining government contracts. The collection provided, on microfilm, the specifications for government contracts currently in the process of bidding-with weekly updates included. To supplement the military standards and specifications, the library ordered industrial standards from trade associations often quoted in the military specifications.

A crucial component of new product development and new business ventures is current information on patents and trademarks. A 1993 Library Services and Construction Act Title I grant of \$23,407 from The State Library of Ohio allowed Main Library to develop Project ADAPT (Akron's Direct Access to Patents and Trademarks.) The service, available in 1994, covers all active United States patents and provides weekly updates containing the entire text, structure, and claims of every U.S. patent filed, exactly as published by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. The service, which includes updated U.S. trademarks from 1984 to the present, is free.

A little extra levy money can do amazing things. Main Library opened on Sunday afternoons beginning on September 13, 1987, for a trial period to end on May 22, 1988. A Family Day celebration was held with clowns, a magic show, animals from the Akron Zoological Park, and an electronic music program. By May, Sunday hours were declared so successful that they were made permanent. Sunday hours henceforth began on the Sunday following Labor Day and ended the Sunday before Memorial Day. By 1989, sixteen branches offered 51 hours of service weekly while Main Library's expanded Sunday hours continued through the school year.

In 1988, the Akron library received \$22,469 from Title I of the Library Services and Construction Act to implement an "English as a Second Language" project. To determine the range of languages most needed in the area, the library worked with the International Institute. Audio cassettes designed to help people whose native language was not English, were then purchased. Akron-Summit County Public Library received a second grant in 1991 of \$22,469 from the State Library of Ohio to continue expanding its collection of foreign language materials. The library purchased print materials in Arabic, Chinese (Mandarin), German, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swahili, and Vietnamese.

Implementation of AKRONFAX, a 1988-89 Library Services and Construction Act project, expanded reference potential at Main, branch libraries and two bookmobiles. Information could be photocopied at any library, then faxed to a patron in another location. This network made the entire reference collection open to a patron anywhere in the Akron-Summit County Public Library system.

Funds available from Title I of the Library Services and Construction Act provided two demonstration projects at Akron-Summit County Public Library. The first of these in 1989 was Project CD-AK-ROM which enabled the public to search for information on CD-ROM (compact disc, read-only memory) format resources. The 1990 Major Urban Resource Libraries (MURLS) grant supported Books in Boxes - two hundred titles in sets of thirty-six copies which were ordered and boxed in plastic containers for circulation beginning in 1991. Teachers, Scout leaders, parents and youth group leaders borrowed the boxes for a period of four weeks to use with youngsters in kindergarten through eighth grade. Books in Boxes were an immediate success. In the first year 2,700 books circulated.

By September, 1993, branch libraries as well as Main Library offered patrons the World Book Information Finder, an electronic version of the *World Book Encyclopedia*. The World Book Information Finder CD-ROM (compact disc-read only memory) contains all 17,000 articles found in the twenty-six volume *World Book*. Because the disc can be searched with multiple locator topics, it offers more rapid retrieval than occurs when using print materials.

A continuing project for many years has been the Science Fair Project, a bibliographic index related to science fair projects published in more than 300 books and periodicals published between 1960 and 1972. The index was first published in 1975 by Scarecrow Press, Inc. By 1979 the library had received royalty checks from the sale of the *Science Fair Project Index* totalling \$6,978.71. A supplement covering the years 1973-80 was published in 1983; one covering the years 1981-84 was published in 1986; and one covering the years 1985-89 was published in 1992. The supplement published early in 1992 by Scarecrow Press, included projects for grades K-8. The Science and Technology Division staff, who edited the index, chose the K-8 grade levels because those were the students from whom they got the most questions. Royalties from this project have, since publication of the first index in 1974, been used to expand the book budget for the Science and Technology Division. Work on the next supplement is in progress.

Because of patron interest in compact discs, purchase of this format began in 1988. Distributed first at Main Library, the collection was quickly extended to the branches. Circulation of vinyl Long Playing records dropped by 7,000 between 1988 and 1989 while 2,365 CD's were borrowed. Discarded vinyl records were added to Friends of the Library book sales, culminating on December 15, 1992, in a massive sale of vinyl records. Collectors of all ages stood in line waiting for the gates of the Rebenack Gallery to open so they could purchase old favorites.

Watching from the sidelines with some sadness was G. Ward Evans, the library's "Mr. Music" for twenty-six years. Evans built the collection that was being dismantled. He joined the Akron Public Library in April, 1951, when the Record Section was in its infancy. The section had been opened on July 25, 1949, through the efforts of musical groups in the area which obtained 100 records (78 revolutions per minute) and \$935 to start the service.

Evans was not a librarian. Catherine M. Harkness, head of Main Library, told Evans that his knowledge of music was what the library needed. A record collector since 1930, Evans had worked for Lyon and Healy Music Company which closed its Akron store in 1950. Evans was a church organist at Grace Reformed Church and taught piano for nearly ten years.

When the new Main Library opened, Evans' department provided protective canvas record bags when borrowers took their selections home. The bags were frequently used for things other than records. "The bags were sometimes returned damp," Evans remembered. "One patron said his puppy had used it; another, a baby! We handled those bags gingerly." Watching the record buyers snap up treasures with glee, Evans commented, "I am glad that the vinyl records were sold to devoted collectors." Evans retired from library service in 1977.

James Rauh, president of Rauh Rubber Company, read about the library's financial difficulties in 1992 and decided to help. He invited the Audio Visual Services head, Richard Ewing, to pick out 800 compact discs to be added to the library's collection. Titles chosen ranged from blues,

gospel and rock and roll to Christmas music and “golden oldies” from the days of the Big Bands. The CDs were spread throughout the library system for easy access by patrons.

TC Architects was retained in 1982 to make a thorough physical assessment of Main Library and the branches. At Main Library, cracked concrete in front of the building and in the High Street Court was removed and replaced. Second and third floor restrooms were remodelled with handicapped access added on the second floor. Thermal windows were ordered in Science and Technology and Business, Labor and Government Divisions to conserve energy. At the same time a landscape contract was negotiated with Weaver Industries for maintenance of lawns at Main and nine branches at a cost of \$18,125.

Major changes in library use and the need for additional space caused renovation of the second floor area from the High Street entrance to the elevator core in 1991. The area, which included the Music Lounge, Audio Visual Services, and Fine Arts and Recreation Divisions was opened up to provide a second circulation desk equipped to handle both print and non-print materials. The Audio Visual Services Division was expanded to include all non-print formats, allowing more space for display of cassettes and compact discs as well as videotapes.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, a new wheelchair ramp was installed in 1992 from High Street to the Frank W. Steere Courtyard. The original doors on both High and Main Streets were replaced with automatic sliding doors, useful for those with disabilities but also for those with armloads of books. Changes to the public elevator were also made. The control panel was lowered to be accessible to patrons in wheelchairs. In addition, a bell system was installed to announce the arrival of the elevator at each floor to assist the visually-impaired.

During National Library Week, 1993, new equipment to help the vision-impaired was unveiled at Main Library and all 17 branches. Table-top magnifiers with adjustable arms and closed circuit TV with video magnifiers were made available for persons with moderate visual impairments and learning disabilities. Two Kurzweil Reading Machines were purchased, one each for Main Library and McDowell Branch. The machines scan both printed and typewritten material and convert it to synthetic speech.

Chapter 11

Celebrations and Events

Indicating its commitment to matters of public concern, the Staff Environmental Task Force took part in the first nationally observed "Earth Week" April 20-25, 1970. William G. Johnson of Business, Labor and Government Division, drove his daughter Ingrid's 1963 Sunbeam automobile into Main Library's second floor lobby to illustrate one of the major causes of pollution. During the week, environmental films were shown in Munn Auditorium for public viewing, and F. Eugene Smith, Akron urban designer, showed his film "Why Ugliness?"

Main Library became involved in the beginnings of a national concentration on ethnicity when it sponsored a Polish Afternoon on September 16, 1972. The program opened a three-month exhibition of Polish arts, crafts and graphics, brought together for the library by Maria Z. Kuberczyk of Brecksville, a Polish language instructor in the Department of Special Programs at The University of Akron. Kuberczyk wanted people to know that being Polish involved more than dancing the polka and eating kielbasa. The Polish Afternoon was replete with music by Marian Lott, Assistant Professor of Music, and the reading of a Polish epic poem by Dr. William B. Steis, Associate Professor of Speech and Theater Arts, both from The University of Akron. Traditional foods were served, cooked by Kuberczyk's language students at the university; they also served as hostesses wearing Polish costumes. Polanie Dance Troupe of Youngstown, also in costume, performed during the afternoon.

Kuberczyk continued the emphasis on ethnicity in 1973 with an exhibition of photographs illustrating the life of Copernicus (1473- 1543), the founder of modern astronomy. A program was held in Munn Auditorium honoring Copernicus' 500th anniversary. Marta Ptaszynska, composer-percussionist from Poland, played her own composition, "Space Model." Polish poster art, considered the most original in the world at the time, was eventually displayed in the Main Library exhibit hall. The exhibit sent from the Embassy of the Polish People's Republic in New York City vanished in transit. It was finally discovered through an accidental telephone call to Barberton Public Library where the shipment had been delivered and whose staff members didn't know what to do with it.

Because of the growing interest in ethnicity and its many aspects, ethnic cooking classes were arranged in cooperation with Frances Keller (Mrs. Richard D.) of the Consumer Information

Division of East Ohio Gas Company. Beginning in February, 1973, classes in ethnic cooking were held in East Ohio Gas Company's kitchen and auditorium in Cascade Plaza. The library offered accompanying book lists, book displays and recipes for Chinese, Jewish, Polish, Swedish, Soul, Greek, French, and Hungarian cooking.

Cooks included Kyllan Mellor (Mrs. Frederic W. Jr.), Swedish; Russell Vernon, French; Janet Han, Chinese; Helen Hermann, Polish; Angeliki Bellios (Mrs. C.N.) and Smaro Michael (Mrs. John), Greek; Laurel Fischer (Mrs. Sy Louis), Jewish; Adele Sziraky (Mrs. Andrew), Hungarian; Kazue E. Moroi (Mrs. David), Japanese; Carmen Gomez, Colombian; Terkman Ellis (Mrs. Nick), Lebanese; and Cynthia Washington, (Mrs. Martin), Soul. The series continued in 1975 with Jean Resh (Mrs. Owen), Italian, and Gowri Pillai (Mrs. Badmanabha), Indian.

The Library Staff Association took advantage of the interest in the cooking classes and requested favorite recipes from staff members. These, added to the ethnic recipes from the visiting cooks, were presented to the public in a cookbook titled, *Who-o-o-o-o's Cooking?* Cost of one copy was \$2.50. (Subsequent cookbooks were published by the Staff Association. *Homemade* appeared in 1984; *Still Homemade* was published in 1991. The cost: \$6.50.)

Then came one hundred years of library service to Akron and Summit County! And everyone at the Akron Public Library celebrated those one hundred years between 1874 and 1974. The Board of Trustees asked Paul Belcher, local banker and bird watcher, to serve as chairman of the 100th Anniversary Committee. Appointed to serve with him were Mayor John Ballard, William C. Becker, Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.), Betty Dalton (Mrs. John), Edward Davis, Margaret Dietz (Mrs. Richard), John Floberg, Barbara Hiney (Mrs. Kenneth), Robert Kidney, Joyce Lagios, Ben Maidenburg, Patricia Norman (Mrs. John), Edwin L. Parms, Tress Pittenger, Robert Schmidt, H. Paul Schrank, Jr., and Edwin J. Thomas.

The significant events of that first century were captured in concise form by Friends president Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.) in the publication: *Akron Public Library: A Century of Service, 1874-1974*. Photographs borrowed from area organizations and friends contributed to the history's effectiveness, as did library artist Lucella Wiley's drawing of the Masonic Temple Building which housed the library from 1874 to 1898.

Garson Kanin, author and playwright (*Born Yesterday, Adam's Rib*) was the speaker for a Centennial Banquet held on November 12, 1974, at the Downtown Holiday Inn. Martha Bray (Mrs. William P. Jr.) served as chairman with help from Janet Michael (Mrs. Burton), book buyer for the M. O'Neil Company. Tickets per person cost \$5.75. Attorney Tress Pittenger raised \$500 in anonymous contributions to defray the expense of bringing Kanin to Akron. In the Main Library lobby, Friends of the Library served birthday cake to patrons on March 1, the actual day the library completed its 100th year. The Friends' long-time vice president Margaret Dalsky (Mrs. Karl), wearing hat and gloves, cut the first piece of cake. Dalsky's father, Louis Seybold, was president of the library board from 1898 to 1902.

The Summit County Historical Society honored the library at its November 14, 1974, general meeting in Munn Auditorium. Fred Randall, 101-year-old member of the Society whose lifetime spanned the history of the library, was among the 110 members and guests who attended. They heard

Dr. George W. Knepper, Professor of History at The University of Akron, talk about "The Intellectual Climate of Akron in the 1870s." His discussion dealt with those Akronites who saw a need for a library and set about establishing one in 1874.

In 1975, the City of Akron celebrated its sesquicentennial year. Of course, the library helped. July 4, 5 and 6 were festival days with the inner belt (Route 59) closed to traffic for a giant Exposition. Friends of the Library did what they do best: they offered used books for sale at a booth at the Expo. The library motto for the day was "One of the basic freedoms which we celebrate is freedom of speech, which includes the right to read. Why not celebrate your freedom with a book from the Friends' book sale?" Why not, indeed. Sales were brisk. Within Main Library, staff members dressed in period costumes. A concert was given by the Akron Chamber Orchestra, and refreshments were served by those Friends of the Library who weren't selling books.

The Akron Beacon Journal columnist Kenneth Nichols spoke to the Friends of the Library on May 1, 1975, about his publication, *Yesterday's Akron*. The book, printed in honor of Akron's sesquicentennial, is a picture documentary of the growth of Akron from a raucous canal boat town to a thriving industrial city, "a social history in pictures," according to Nichols.

In 1976, when the United States celebrated its bicentennial year and the Tall Ships sailed into New York Harbor and onto television screens across the country, Akron again had a big parade. The library's bookmobile, freshly washed and newly painted, took part. People left the parade, coming into the library to cool off, and then to see an eighteen-foot-tall Indian teepee erected in the High Street court by Goodyear Explorer Post #2041. Members of the Post's Indian dance team performed in front of the teepee, and a special program of Indian films was shown in Munn Auditorium. There were weaving and quilting displays as well as a Victorian doll house to be envied by little girls and their mothers.

Library staff members outdid themselves by making cake. Thirty-nine of them baked sheet cakes to create a map of the United States. Almost 1,000 persons sampled the confection. Judy Supple, switchboard operator, supervised the decoration of the massed cakes so they resembled states of the Union. At the end of the celebration, there was no cake left! The very last slice went to an Apache Indian from the San Carlos reservation in Arizona. The cake servers didn't get to ask why the woman was in Akron.

After three years of celebration, nobody saw any reason to stop partying. In 1977 librarians throughout the system observed the seventy-fifth anniversary of Peter Rabbit, the little animal made famous by author and artist, Beatrix Potter. To celebrate the 413th birthday of William Shakespeare, an Elizabethan Fair was held that same year. Players from Weathervane Community Playhouse presented scenes from "Midsummer Night's Dream". Richard Jacoby, Associate Professor of Music at Kent State University, and Marilyn Carlson, director of instrumental collegium musicum and instructor of recorder at Cleveland State University, performed under the name of ARS Antiqua, an early music ensemble presenting music ranging from the Middle Ages to early Baroque. They demonstrated renaissance instruments and melodies for visitors in the exhibit hall, duplicating the conditions under which such music was probably originally performed. In 1983 ARS Antiqua gave another concert at Main Library. Musicians this time were Marilyn Carlson on gothi harp, winds and

hurdy-gurdy; Larry Keith, lute; and Emily Walhout, viols. Continuing the medieval theme, members of the Society for Creative Anachronism taught English folk dances to visitors in the exhibit hall.

Main Library observed its tenth year on Main Street in 1979. Artists who contributed to the building's "Art in Architecture" exhibited new works in the exhibit hall. On Columbus Day, the library hosted a Voter's Education Day debate among the five mayoral candidates: Roy Ray, who was later elected mayor, Ronald Weyandt, Reggie Brooks, Frank Bolar and Ray Kapper. The primary purpose of the well-attended meeting was to present the pros and cons of the County Charter issue which appeared on the November ballot. The mayoral candidates put their positions on record at the same time.

Main Library observed its fifteenth anniversary on April 27, 1984 with a four by eight foot cake in the shape of Main Library. Donated by staff members who were becoming experts at creating culinary extravaganzas, the anniversary cake was made of 109 baked sheet cakes and 109 cans of frosting. It was complete with sculpture, trees, and bushes in the High Street Court - even plexiglass windows. Judy Supple, switchboard operator, was again architect of the cake, assisted by library employees Laurel (Dodie) Alley Benson, Maria Giaquinto McLane and Tammie Damron. Martha Bray (Mrs. William P. Jr.), president of the Board of Trustees, cut the cake, serving over 1,000 slices to visitors. Speakers at the rededication ceremonies included Thomas C. Sawyer, Mayor of Akron; John Ballard, former mayor; John Rebenack, retired chief librarian; and Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director. PM Magazine, a Cleveland television news show, featured the event on its program. Jack Ryan, WAKR disc jockey, broadcast from the library during the event.

Since April, 1984, was National Library Month, Mayor Sawyer declared it Library Month for the area. WAKR-Radio and TV station (now WAKC) and the City Recreation Department continued their Kite-Fly program begun in 1978, and for the first time the library joined the sponsors by offering kite making workshops at Main Library and in the branches. Burton Marks, author of *Kites for Kids*, assisted children's librarians in learning "how to" so they could help the children. Anyone wishing to make a simple kite guaranteed to fly could find kite workshops available at Main Library and many branches during March and April. All materials for making the kite were supplied by the library; kite string and a holder for flying the kite were the responsibility of the maker. White plastic garbage bags decorated to the taste of the kite flier were the material of choice. Kite makers then joined in the annual WAKR-ASCPL Kite Fly held at Schneider Park in Akron. The 1993 event was the fifteenth such outing, the tenth in which the library participated.

Beginning in 1985, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day was celebrated at Main Library. In 1986, the day ceased to be a floating holiday for staff members. In accordance with the national holiday observance, which began in 1986, all libraries closed on that day. A collection of books concerning African-Americans was established in honor of the slain civil rights leader, who was himself the author of five books: *Stride toward Freedom*; *Strength to Love*; *Why We Can't Wait*; *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?*; and *Trumpet of Conscience*.

A speaker of national reputation was included in the yearly commemorative events. In 1985, Julian Bond, Georgia State Senator, was the first speaker for the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Program. His keynote address also dedicated the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., library collection. The day Bond came to town was one of Akron's coldest January days ever at minus 23 degrees. Undaunted, 350 people came to Main Library to hear him.

Other speakers in the series included:

1986: Dr. Mary Frances Berry, U. S. Civil Rights Commissioner

1987: Lerone Bennett, Senior Editor, *Ebony Magazine*

1988: Nikki Giovanni, Poet

1989: Cicely Tyson, Actress

1990: Ray Nunn, Senior Producer of ABC News

1991: Derrick A. Bell, Jr., Weld Professor of Law, Harvard University Law School

1992: Barbara J. Fields, Professor of History at Columbia University

1993: Vernon L. Odom, Sr., retired Executive Director of the Akron Community Service Center and Urban League

1994: Alan C. Page, National Football League legend and Associate Justice, Minnesota Supreme Court, 1993 to the present.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. events were made possible by grants from the Chamberlain Fund and the Esther Mary Cook Fund (see Trusts). Co-sponsors of the annual event are the library, the Akron Community Service Center and Urban League, and Eta Tau Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha. In 1994 the Akron Jewish Community Federation also became a sponsor.

Black History Month included many other activities, book displays and exhibits. Dr. Sherman Jackson of Miami University, Athens, Ohio, talked in 1982 about "The Anti-Slavery Movement in Ohio." Edmond Felix, a native of Haiti, and Hilary Bader of Brooklyn, New York, brought African folk tales to Main Library in 1983. The actor-dancers interspersed their tale-telling with songs, dances, and music performed on African instruments.

As part of the 1985 Black History Month activities, a program titled "Against All Odds: Black Women of Achievement" was held at Wooster Branch. Dr. Willa Player, former president of Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina, also an Akron resident, was keynote speaker. A Smithsonian Institution exhibit using the same name was loaned to the library through the Ohio Humanities Council. The exhibit depicted the achievements of 120 African-American women and was shown at both Wooster and McDowell Branches. An exhibit at Wooster Branch in March, 1992, honored eleven black women lawyers and was sponsored by the local chapter of the National Council of Negro Women. Titled "The Legacy and Living It," the exhibit featured women who could be role models for anyone striving for a career in the legal profession.

Famous and not-so-famous visitors came to the libraries. In 1971 Joseph S. Soosai, librarian for the Rubber Research Institute of Malaya, spent five months at Main Library as did Jafred Shalimba Musisi, chief librarian of the East African Newspapers, Ltd., Nairobi, Kenya. Both were in Akron through a University of Pittsburgh program sponsored by the U.S. State Department. Spending three months studying the library was Dr. Luitgard Camerer, reference librarian at the Braunschweig, West Germany, public library.

Carlos Chavez, Mexican composer, was honored at tea at Main Library following the premier performance of his composition, "Initium" at the opening of E. J. Thomas Performing Arts Center in October, 1973. Joan Mondale, wife of Walter Mondale, the Vice President of the United States, was a guest in 1979. Dagmar Celeste, wife of Ohio Governor Richard F. Celeste, spoke in 1984 for the kickoff of a month-long series of programs on family harmony. The series was co-sponsored by Akron-Summit County Public Library and Ohio Peacemaking Education Network (OPEN). Dorothy Fuldheim, veteran Cleveland television newscaster, helped Green Branch celebrate its fifth birthday in 1984 at the Annual Meeting of the Friends of Green Branch. Fuldheim's appearance at the meeting held at Portage Lakes Joint Vocational High School, was one of her last before her death on November 3, 1989.

Project Read at Wooster Branch was superseded in July, 1976, by Project Discovery, later called Rediscovery. Both projects were funded by Library Services and Construction Act grants through The State Library of Ohio. Project Rediscovery received \$135,034 in federal funds for two years. The emphasis in Project Rediscovery was placed on contact with community groups rather than on the individual so that larger numbers of neighborhood people could be reached. The tutorial component of the project incorporated the Phi Delta Kappa Systematic Approach to Reading Improvement (SARI). In the two years from the beginning of Project Read in 1974, there were gains at Wooster Branch of 67 percent in circulation, 14 percent in registration, 616 percent in reference use, and 27 percent in number of visitors. The project ended on September 30, 1978, after being extended one quarter year longer than planned. Significant reading improvement was made by 166 of the 201 persons enrolled in the program. Because of its success, the library and Alpha Phi Alpha jointly continued Project Read and Project Rediscovery to advance literacy at Wooster Branch.

At a meeting of the library board on March 31, 1981, trustee Elizabeth Ricketts (Mrs. Edward), presented a special citation of appreciation to Claude W. Carter, Mike Buckner and Edwin L. Parns of Eta Tau Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity in honor of their work with African-American young people at Wooster Branch Library. The men had just given twelve copies of the book, *Black Excellence*, to the board which thanked them and their organization for assisting Mildred Wright, Wooster Branch librarian, with Project Read and Project Rediscovery, as well as other programs for children. The men were also honored for founding the Police-Community Dialogue program in the area and for their sponsorship of Black Santa, who visited children at the library in December, beginning in 1975.

Summer reading clubs were a part of children's activities from the time of the move into the Summit Street library in 1942. Ranging from the Lost Island Reading Club featuring Cricket the Cat to 1993's Discover Summer Adventure, the summer reading clubs enticed children into the library and into reading books. Beginning in 1979, the Community Relations Department at Main Library developed thematic program materials, not only for the Akron-Summit County Public Library system, but for libraries around the State of Ohio as well. This cooperation ended in 1990 when the Akron library staff found the program too labor-intensive and cash-prohibitive to continue.

In 1978, McDonald's, the fast food company, supplied food coupons to achieving readers in the Summer Reading Club program, increasing the number of participants by 14 percent. Over

7,500 coupons were distributed to children who read ten or more books. McDonald's also provided refreshments at the Summer Reading Club parties concluding the programs. This relationship has continued, benefiting both organizations, and encouraging many more youngsters to read books during the summer.

Having a teletype for the deaf at the Main Library switchboard led to other programs for hearing-impaired people. Two programs, geared to both the hearing and the hearing-impaired were presented at Main Library in 1981. Cleveland's Fairmount Theater of the Deaf performed a portion of the play, *The FourPoster*, to a crowd in Munn Auditorium. In December of that year, the Cuyahoga Valley Youth Ballet offered the *Nutcracker Suite* for families. Furniture and magazine racks in the second floor lounge were relocated to create a stage and seating area. Over 300 attended.

In 1982 the library negotiated with the local Marks Cablevision Company to expand library service through its television programming. "Infocus," an informational program for adults, went on air in July. With Steven Hawk as host, the program involved location scenes such as Great Lakes Shakespeare Festival, World Series of Golf, and the Alpha Phi Alpha housing project. The library produced two programs a month which the cable company showed twice weekly. "Passport to Adventure," a series for young people, went on air in September, 1982, and included visits to local historical, cultural and educational places as well as story-telling by library personnel. Diane Klem and Alex Cikra of the library staff were the initial hosts. They were later succeeded by Judith Rosenberg as host. Western Reserve Cable TV Consortium added some of the programs to its schedule in mid-July. Warner-Amex Cable added both programs in 1983, increasing the potential audience to 65-70,000 homes.

The programs brought the library national applause. Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director, Patricia Latshaw, Community Relations director, and the Community Relations Department received a prestigious John Cotton Dana Special Award for Library Public Relations in 1983. Given by the American Library Association's Library Administration and Management Division, the award was presented to Hawk and Latshaw in June in Los Angeles. Sponsored by the H. W. Wilson Company, the award honored the library's work "for an outstanding image-building campaign including consistency in graphics and effective use of cable television to market the library as the key community information resource" in cooperation with local cable companies to promote the library and its activities as well as activities in the community. Akron Public Library, its officers and public relations director, Patricia Waldron, received a similar award in 1963 for the successful campaign in 1962 to pass the bond issue to build the new library. The 1963 award was presented for a "professionally executed blueprint for action to effect passage of a bond issue."

There was always something going on in the library that involved members of the Akron community. In the 1970's five area garden clubs exhibited gorgeous arrangements of spring flowers in the third floor auditorium. That same year a Body Language program concerning health for women featured Drs. Eleanor Bozeman and Robert Baxter as speakers. Ellet High School students presented a Japanese play, "The Magic Mallet of the Devil" as part of their world literature studies. Duncan B. Wolcott of Silver Lake displayed his treasured ice cream molds; Richard Everhard of Tallmadge loaned his collection of antique toys. Sol, Melvin and Charles Sacks presented a sixteen

volume *Encyclopedia Judaica* to the library.

Tight economic conditions in 1982 brought fathers as well as mothers to story hours for children. While in the library, they were invited to other programs on ways to improve quality of life under straitened circumstances, how to raise children (good anytime), deal with stress, invest money and feed a family nutritiously on a tight budget. It was no surprise to library staff members that escapist mysteries topped the list of fiction titles borrowed.

Akron-Summit County Public Library joined with the Ohio Humanities Council in 1983 in funding three programs to explore First Amendment rights in the Eighties. Open to the public, the topics discussed were: "For Adults Only? What Limits a Child's Right to Read?"; "Cults: Freedom of Religion? Do Freedom of Religion Guarantees Include Cults?"; and "Who Chooses the News-What is the Responsibility of the Press to the Community?"

Another successful event was the Collector's Luck and Trash Day held in November, 1983, at Main Library. Frank Klein of the Bookseller, Inc., talked about old books and bindings; Pat Barrett, manager of Schoolhouse Antiques, discussed antique rugs; Doc Ford, president of the Ohio Antique Bottle Club, talked about his specialty; Sherry Early, author, talked about antique clothing and jewelry; and Jack Richard, artist, discussed restoration of oil paintings. The experts evaluated "treasures" brought by patrons.

Long before the election of President William J. Clinton in 1992, saxophone music wafted through the halls at Main Library. For several years the library had compiled bookmarks listing library resources about selected composers whose work was scheduled for performance at E. J. Thomas Hall by the Akron Symphony Orchestra. These bookmarks were inserted in the Symphony programs on performance nights. In 1985, soon after this cooperation began, the Symphony offered to share with the library the services of saxophonist Kenneth Radnofsky, who was to appear with the symphony through a grant from the Affiliate Artists' Program funded by the *Readers Digest*. Radnofsky appeared at a lunch hour program in Main Library, playing selections from his repertoire.

In 1985, a photography contest was sponsored by the library as part of the American Library Association's "Nation of Readers" contest. The photographs were shown in the exhibit hall. *Akron Beacon Journal* photographer Bill Hunter; Irving Olson, Akronite noted for his travel photography; and University of Akron photography instructor Kevin Olds served as judges for the contest.

Programs for adults included on October 3, 1992 a "Meet the Artists" reception at North Branch which honored local artists who had contributed to the ambience of the library. National Library Week speakers at Main Library in three successive years included travel author Arthur Frommer in 1986, National Public Radio personality Nina Totenburg in 1987, poet Dr. Kenneth Koch in 1989 and author George Plimpton in 1990. In October, 1993, detective story addicts heard Michael Z. Lewin, author of seven mysteries featuring private detective Albert Samson, talk about the "Life Cycle of the Mystery Novel." Lewin's appearance at Main Library coincided with the release of his new novel, "Underdog," published by Mysterious Press.

In 1988 a series of programs funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and held in Akron, Ohio, and in Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island was titled "Common Ground:

the migration of Yankee culture from New England to Ohio's Western Reserve". The programs dealt with three separate times in the history of the migration: the settlement of the Western lands, as Ohio was then known; the rise of education; and the abolitionist years before the Civil War. Scholars from New England and Ohio were speakers for the programs. Representing Ohio were Dr. George W. Knepper and Dr. Rita Saslaw from The University of Akron, and Dr. Shirla McClain from Kent State University. In addition, dramatic presentations, "Elizabeth Porter: Frontier School Teacher" and "July 1869: Brown vs. Copeland" offered at Main Library, allowed audience participation in the events of the times depicted. The third play, "The Leaves of Vallombrosa," depicting the life of Harriet Beecher Stowe was presented at Weathervane Community Playhouse which donated the use of its theater for the event.

Do not for a moment think that libraries are dull places filled with dusty books and librarians who say "shhhhh!" With passage of the second temporary millage levy in 1989 which provided much needed additional funds, libraries in the Akron-Summit County Public Library system had more books to loan, more services to offer, and many more activities to entice people into Main Library and its branches.

Throughout the system there were things to do and see. Madcap Productions Puppet Theatre in 1990 and 1992 presented "Funny Fairy Tales" at Main Library, using life-size puppets and recruiting audience members as performers. Ventriloquist Mark Wade brought his friends, Rodney the Duck and George the Joke Book, to entertain children enrolled in the Summer Reading Club in 1989, 1991 and 1994. Clowns performed at other Summer Reading Club parties; youngsters ate apples at Mogadore Branch's Johnny Appleseed Day. Children made puppets, kites, crafts, and paper airplanes. They also tried their hands at cartooning after an illustrated talk by *Akron Beacon Journal* cartoonist Chip Bok at Ellet Branch in 1990.

The year 1989 was designated "The Year of the Young Reader." The seven independent Summit County libraries joined together to celebrate at Stan Hywet Hall and Gardens on September 16. Children's authors Bonnie Pryor, Patricia Lillie, Marilyn Sadler, Tim Bowers, Judith Hendershot, and Nancy McArthur were on hand to discuss their stories and to autograph books. George Latshaw, internationally recognized puppeteer, offered "Wilbur and the Giant" in the middle of the day. Slogan for the day was "Give us books; give us wings."

As part of National Library Week festivities sponsored nation-wide by the American Library Association in 1990, libraries everywhere held "Nights of a Thousand Stars." A read-aloud program, adults and children read excerpts from their favorite books. At McDowell Branch, TV Channel 8 General Manager Virgil Dominic and his wife, Shawn, read some of their favorite stories. At Northfield Branch, former Ohio Senate President Oliver Ocasek, free-lance writer Jill Sell, and local bed and breakfast owners George and Katie Hoy participated. At other branches library users who volunteered to read were the "stars." Among them were very new adult readers enrolled in Project: LEARN, the program to teach adults how to read.

"Night of a Thousand Stars" was repeated in 1991 at Main Library and in every branch. Virgil Dominic had such a good time that he returned to McDowell Branch to read (with gestures!) one of his favorites, "Caps for Sale." Other guest stars who read in 1992 included Deputy Mayor Dorothy

Jackson, TV personality Jan Jones, Channel 23's Phil Hoffman, and Akron Councilwoman Barbara Sykes. The program continues to be a yearly success in many library branches.

To mark the 1991 bicentennial of America's Bill of Rights, the library set up displays of banned books to focus attention on the unique privileges afforded residents of the United States as a result of this amazing document. Large, free-standing exhibits about the Bill of Rights were shown at Main Library and in all the branches. The exhibits titled "To Preserve These Rights" were developed by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council and made available to libraries by the American Bar Association and the American Library Association. The displays contained facsimiles of the Bill of Rights documents as well as information about those rights in action. Congressman Thomas C. Sawyer joined twenty community leaders at Main Library for a special program celebrating the Bill of Rights and its longevity. Attorney David Lieberth served as moderator for the program.

Chapter 12

Staff

The Library's Staff Association was formed in 1952 with Dorothy Tricker as its first president. Tricker served in that position twice: from 1952-1953 and again from 1966-1967. She retired from both library and Staff Association in May, 1967. At the time of her retirement Tricker was head of Ellet Branch Library, a position she had held since 1947. She joined the Akron Public Library in 1931 in the Reader's Advisory Reference Division. She was adult librarian at Firestone Branch, worked in Main Library's Reference Division, and joined the Business and Labor Service in 1945 when it was organized. A native of St. Paul, Minnesota, Tricker received her library degree from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts.

Besides her involvement with the Staff Association and myriad library activities, Tricker was active in the community. In 1955 she won the Community Service Award from North Springfield Presbyterian Church for "outstanding leadership and devoted service." She worked for the United Fund, the Y. W. C. A., the Ellet Community Council which she served as secretary, and Ritzman School where the Parent-Teachers Association gave her a life membership in their organization. Under Tricker's leadership, the Staff Association salvaged and sold newspapers and held many other fund-raisers to pay for the Elmer Novotny painting of R. Russell Munn and the Don Drumm stable in the third floor stairwell of the new Main Library.

The Staff Association developed its own news letter, the *Staff Reporter*. In the early 1960's the publication was a chatty affair including the Librarian's report on board activities, "articles worth your attention," a description of gowns worn at the Spring Party at Firestone Country Club to raise money for the staff art fund (\$343.50 was added to the treasury). There were photographs of the models, the raffle gifts, and the guests. Each edition presented a report on the status of the Flower Fund which was used to send cards to the ill, or flowers in case of death in a staff person's family. Main Library divisions, each branch and the Extension Division reported on their activities. The publication ran at times to twelve mimeographed pages. Issues got smaller as the years passed. By 1993 the *Staff Reporter* looked much more professional but had less news. Concerns remained the same, however. A story about a staff member, Angela Gibson, who died after a "long battle" with cancer and how Staff Association had helped during her illness, was featured prominently in the June-July 1993 issue which ran to three pages.

Grace Scott, Staff Association president from 1973-1974, made a request to the trustees that a staff representative be permitted to attend board meetings. Board members, "though concerned, thought staff participation would not be desirable." Reasons given were that the Librarian always reported on board activities at the general staff meetings, that the Librarian's door was never closed, and that employees did not need appointments to see him. Staff members were invited to "come on your own as citizens—not on library time."

Frances B. Murphey, an *Akron Beacon Journal* reporter who had been covering library activities since 1945, began her continuing coverage of board meetings in January, 1975, in accordance with the State of Ohio's "Sunshine Law" which declared meetings of public bodies open to anyone interested. Declared "one of the best friends the library has ever had" by R. Russell Munn, Murphey's stories about library activities and difficulties awoke readers' awareness to programs and problems. Her writing contributed immeasurably to the successful passage of the 1962 construction bond issue and to passage of the 1984 and 1989 levy campaigns for temporary operating funds, neither of which took the place of government funding but enhanced monies already available to provide greater service to the public.

By 1978, at Rebenack's suggestion, Curtice G. Myers and Steven Hawk, assistant librarians, were invited to attend the library board meetings. When Steven Hawk became Librarian-Director, staff members attending with regularity in addition to the librarian-director and the clerk-treasurer were the librarian-assistant directors, community relations director, personnel director, service coordinator for Main Library and Branches and Mobile Services, as well as occasional branch library staff members, and the president of the Staff Association.

A six-point grievance procedure was adopted by the library in 1974 after board members agreed that having employees represented by the Staff Association was preferable to representation by an outside agency. The Staff Association accepted the procedure which the board approved, effective immediately. A Staff Development Committee was also instituted to develop regular in-service training programs for library staff.

Following adoption of the position classification and pay plan completed in 1977 by James Yarger of Yarger and Associates, a framework was developed for the creation of performance reviews. Work sessions on employee performance review and evaluation were conducted at Main Library in March and April, 1978, by Robert L. Robinson, director of the Institute for Human Resource, Research and Development in Cleveland. The sessions included discussion of job descriptions, performance standards and evaluations. Following the initial workshops, the entire staff became involved in writing job descriptions for their positions, then in creating standard performance levels for those jobs. Emphasis was placed on understanding work performed by staff and its impact on service. Staff members attended professional meetings to share ideas with peers in other libraries around the country. During 1979, staff in all grades developed their position descriptions, outlined major responsibilities and set standards of performance. An additional personnel practice since 1980, has been an effort to engage children's librarians who hold professional library degrees to fill vacancies in the system for children's librarians.

Pregnancy as a reason for taking sick leave was added to the *Employee Handbook* in 1980.

Pregnant employees could take sick leave for any incapacitation due to the pregnancy or the birth of a child. Sick leave was also granted for illness occurring among members of the employee's immediate family.

Board members and administrative staff spent three days in July, 1982 at Loyola of the Lakes Conference Center to plan for the future of the library. At that meeting they scheduled the first in-service workshop for members of the staff. The library closed county-wide on November 12, 1982 for the first time for the purpose of In-Service Day. There were other firsts. The board presented awards to 140 staff members, honoring them for their years of service. Awards were given after the first five years and for each subsequent five up to and including twenty-five years. Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library contributed \$1,250 toward purchase of the awards; \$2,000 was drawn from the Chamberlain Fund.

Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.), Vice President of the Akron-Summit County Public Library Board of Trustees, said, "The in-service training day was very important because it brought together all the employees of the library in one place at the same time. The event allowed the entire staff to hear the same message at the same time from the same people, eliminating a great deal of misunderstanding. The day also allowed many who work in outlying branches to see Main Library for the first time and to meet the people with whom they converse daily on the telephone."

For that first In-Service Training Day, Patricia Groseck, communications director of the Public Library of Columbus and Franklin County, spoke about "The Library's Image in a Community." Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director of the Akron-Summit County Public Library, talked about "Image and Survival: Library Realities in the 80's," and Martha Bray presented "The Board Perspective of Public Service."

In 1985, the library was required for the first time to file an Office of Equal Opportunity report. That first report listed the adult full-time work force at 203 persons. Of those, males accounted for 12 percent, females for 87.2 percent. Whites comprised 82.8 percent; African-Americans, 16.8 percent. The administration included eight white males; twenty-five white females; two black females; one Asian Pacific Islander. Of professional librarians (with MLS degrees), there were five white males, thirty-eight white females and two black females.

In contrast, the 1993 Office of Employment Equal Opportunity report listed the adult full-time work force at 200 persons. Of those, 20 percent (or 39) were male; 80 percent (or 161), were female. Whites numbered 79 percent (or 161), African-Americans, 19 percent (or 37), and one percent (or two) were Asian/Pacific Islanders. In administrative positions were five white males and twenty-four white females, three African-American females and one Asian/Pacific Islander. All administrative personnel held advanced degrees. Listed as part-time or temporary employees were 132 persons of whom 65 percent (or 87) were white, and 34 percent (or 45) were African-Americans. Of this part-time number, 34 were males and 98 females.

In 1987, the Staff Association requested the ability to job share. A one-year trial program went into effect on August 1, 1987, using persons familiar with the library who could function as a team to fill one job. Two professional job-share teams were formed involving Richelle (Ricki) Ethington and Elizabeth Hollis in Business, Labor and Government, and Nancy Mohler and Marilyn

Minney in the Language, Literature, and History Divisions.

The first man to job-share was Jonathan Hershey, who was Ann Downing's partner in Circulation Department. Because the program had worked so well during the previous fifteen-month trial period, in 1988 the board made job-sharing a permanent policy; allowed were one job-share team in a facility with ten or fewer employees and not more than two teams in an agency with more than ten employees. By October, there were six teams, and the original pairs had stayed together during the entire fifteen-month trial period. Turnover, according to Personnel Director Cynthia Sabula, was zero. Reasons given by employees for choosing job-sharing were simple: child care by a parent was improved and school attendance by the employee was made possible. From the perspective of supervisors, the program was found useful in completing special projects, programming in terms of attendance levels, and coverage of public service areas.

A wellness program helping employees deal with weight loss, stress reduction, and drug and alcohol abuse, was established in 1988. The trustees agreed to pay one hundred percent of the cost for one of the approved cease-smoking courses at Akron City Hospital or Akron General Medical Center. For programs dealing with the other areas, the board agreed to partial subsidies. In line with ordinances of the City of Akron and the County of Summit which banned smoking in private as well as public places of business, the library adopted a no-smoking/clean air policy effective on March 1, 1989.

Akron-Summit County Public Library has offered to its employees health insurance benefits for many years, although the plan and its carriers have changed several times. In the past decade, dental and vision insurance was added to the plan. In April 1993, a hospitalization, dental and vision plan serving the 191 employees who chose to join (two-thirds of the library system's staff) was contracted with Travelers Insurance in Atlanta, Georgia. Employees continued to pay twenty percent of the premium; the library paid the remaining eighty percent. The new plan increased total costs by 12.3 percent, or \$5,835 per month.

Chapter 13

Library Board Members

Suzanne W. Pierce

When Frank W. Steere, Jr. declined to seek reappointment after thirty years with the library board in 1988, Suzanne W. Pierce was appointed by Summit County Executive John Morgan to a seven-year term on the board to end on May 15, 1995. She was elected board president in 1993. A native of Des Moines, Iowa, Pierce holds both bachelor's and master's degrees from The University of Akron where she has been a part-time lecturer in the History Department. She is owner of Pierce Typesetting in Akron.

Pierce served as campaign manager in 1979 for Citizens for a County Charter, and in 1980 managed the re-election campaign of Congressman John F. Seiberling. In 1980 she was also district office manager of the U.S. Bureau of Commerce, Decennial Census; in 1981-83 she was executive director of the Akron Area Affiliate of the American Diabetes Association. In addition to her professional activities, she has volunteered with the Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services of Summit County, Ohio Region X Council on Alcoholism, Visiting Nurse Service, and Goals for Greater Akron Area.

C. Blake McDowell, Jr.

C. Blake McDowell, Jr., appointed in 1976 to complete the unexpired term of his famous father, C. Blake McDowell, Sr., was graduated from Colgate University in Hamilton, New York and received the law degree from the University of Michigan Law School in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He is associated with his father's law firm, Brouse & McDowell. As was his father, McDowell, Jr. is active in community affairs, serving on the Great Trail Council of the Boy Scouts of America and the board of Akron General Medical Center. He is a charter member of the West Akron Kiwanis Club. He was president of the library board from 1986 to 1988 and named vice president in 1994. He retired from the board in May of 1994 at the expiration of his term.

Lolita Adair

When Marjorie Capotosto Shanahan resigned from the Board of Trustees in September, 1987, County Executive John Morgan appointed realtor Lolita Adair to complete Shanahan's term.

She was reappointed by County Executive Tim Davis to a full seven-year term beginning in 1991. Adair attended the University of Pittsburgh and opened her own real estate company, Lolita Adair Realty, in 1979. She served as president of Fair Housing, Incorporated and is a member of the Akron Area Board of Realtors. In 1993 she was a trustee of Akron Community Foundation and was named secretary of the library board the same year.

James J. Coats

James J. Coats, CPA was named to the library board on February 7, 1994, following his appointment by Summit County executive Tim Davis and approval by the Summit County Council. His appointment to run to May, 1996, filled out the term of Elizabeth Ricketts (Mrs. Edward) who resigned in 1993. Coats, co-founder and managing director of Brockman, Coats, Gedelian & Co., accountants, received a bachelor of science degree from Bowling Green (Ohio) State University where he did post-graduate work in accounting. His memberships include the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and its Management Advisory Services and Technology Divisions, and the Ohio Society of Certified Public Accountants. At the time of his appointment, Coats was president of Info Line, treasurer of American Subcontractors Association, Akron-Canton Chapter, director and committee chairman of the Small Business Council of Akron Regional Development Board, and a member of Rotary, International.

Bharati A. Desai, M.D.

Bharati A. Desai, M.D. joined the library board on July 28, 1994 following her appointment by the Court of Common Pleas. She replaced C. Blake McDowell, Jr. who retired at the expiration of his term in May, 1994. Bharati Desai was born in India. She graduated from the S.I.E.S. College in Bombay, India and received her M.B.B.S. degree from Topiwala Medical College. She did her internship and residencies at hospitals in Detroit before joining the staff of St. Thomas Medical Center in Akron in 1977. In October of 1989 she joined Professional Anesthesia Service, Inc. because of the merger between St. Thomas and Akron City Hospitals. Since then she has been staff anesthesiologist at Summa Health System. Dr. Desai is certified by the American Board of Anesthesiology and belongs to the Summit County Medical Society, the Ohio State Medical Association, the Ohio Society of Anesthesiology, and the American Society of Anesthesiology.

Anne Carey Green

When Anne Carey Green, then 33 years old, joined the Akron-Summit County Public Library Board of Trustees in November, 1977, she became one of the youngest trustees since the library became an entity in 1874. She was appointed to complete the seven-year term of Ron G. Fisher, research director of the United Rubber Workers who resigned. Green is director of research and education for the International Chemical Workers Union.

Green was born and educated in Hammondsport, New York, where she worked five summers in the local winery. She was graduated from LeMoyne College in Syracuse, New York, and two years later received a master's degree in labor and industrial relations from the University of Illinois at

Urbana. She came to Akron in 1968. She commented, "Within a month I took out a library card because I was spending too much money on paperbacks." Green was appointed to a full seven-year term in May, 1983. In 1990, she was reappointed for a second full term of seven years by the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas. She was at that time president of the board.

Gary M. Rosen

Judges of the Court of Common Pleas appointed attorney Gary M. Rosen to a full seven-year term expiring in May, 1999. Rosen succeeded Allen F. Killings, D.D.S., who had served on the board since 1968. Rosen graduated from Firestone High School in Akron, and received a bachelor's degree in political science from Tufts University in Massachusetts. He holds a Juris Doctor degree from the National Law Center at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He was a principal in the law firm of Blakemore, Rosen, Meeker & Varian Co., L.P.A. from 1978 to 1984 and again from 1989-1990. From 1984-1989 he was chief city prosecutor for the City of Akron. He is currently a partner in the law firm of Goldman & Rosen.

Rosen's volunteer activities include work with community groups which deal with curing domestic violence, drug abuse, and abuse and neglect of children. In 1992 he was a trustee for the Victim Assistance Program and for the Akron Jewish Community Federation. Rosen received the Harold K. Stubbs Humanitarian Award for Outstanding Service in the field of law in 1991 as well as outstanding service awards from the Mental Health Association of Summit County in 1985, 1986, and 1987. He is listed in *Who's Who in American Law* and *Who's Who in Emerging Leaders*.

James D. Switzer

Professor of English in the Community and Technical College of The University of Akron, James D. Switzer became a member of the board on July 29, 1993. Switzer was appointed by County Executive Tim Davis. He succeeded Raymond R. Brown who gave the library 24 years of board service. Switzer graduated from the College of Wooster, Ohio, earning a master's degree in English literature at Kent State University. He taught English in the Akron Public Schools and in 1965 was appointed to the faculty of The University of Akron. He has been a member of the Friends of the Akron-Summit County Public Library since 1984 and served on the board of the Friends of the University Library as chairman and vice chairman. Switzer has been a member of the Akron Urban Design and Fine Arts Commission since 1984, and since 1987 has been a board member for Service Academy Selection. He has been a prescreening juror for the American Film and Video Festival for several years and was a member of the Congressional Futures Forum Advisory Council from 1990 to 1992.

Recent Past Members of the Library Board who completed one or more terms

Martha Bray

When Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.) was appointed to the library board in 1971, she was to fill out the unexpired term of Betty Burchett Cline who moved to Aurora, Ohio. At the same time

Bray was named to the library board, a ginkgo tree was planted in her honor at West Junior High School. As immediate past president of the Akron Parent-Teachers Association, Bray selected West Junior High School as the place for the memorial tree to be planted because it was her alma mater. She was a graduate of The University of Akron where she earned a bachelor's degree in secretarial science while working as a page in the university library.

She served the board as president from 1983-84 at which time her term expired. No action was taken on her reappointment until August. Then Summit County Executive John Morgan told Bray he intended to change the composition of the board and appointed Marjorie Capotosto Shanahan to a seven-year term in Bray's place. Shanahan had served as deputy mayor under Mayor John Ballard, as director of the county Council of Governments, and as president of Women's Network. She resigned from the board three years later.

Fellow board members honored Bray for her thirteen years of service at a dinner on September 4, 1984, at the Akron City Club. They gave her a pewter plate as a memento of her library years and a framed resolution praising her efforts to pass the first operating levy in the 110 year history of the library, for helping add the McDowell and Green Branch Libraries and relocating Richfield and Tallmadge Branches. Bray continued her efforts on behalf of the library when she became an active member of the Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library, serving that organization as its president from 1990 until 1994.

Raymond R. Brown

Raymond R. Brown, past president of the Board of Trustees and retired executive of the National Urban League, served as library trustee twice for a total of twenty-four years: from 1957-1968 and from 1980-1993. In 1980 he succeeded Walter E. deBruin, Sr. . Brown was elected to the board of The State Library of Ohio in 1968; he served as vice president of that organization from 1971-1973 and completed his term of office in 1979. In 1973, Governor John J. Gilligan appointed Brown as chairman of the first statewide Ohio Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services. That was also the year Brown received the Trustee of the Year Award from the Ohio Library Trustees Association. In 1977, Brown became State Library Board liaison for the White House Conference on Library and Information Services in Washington, D.C. and in 1990 served on the delegate selection committee for the 1991 White House Conference. In 1968, he was named Social Worker of the Year and in 1991 he received the Whitney M. Young, Jr., Medallion awarded by the National Urban League.

Brown was educated in the Akron public schools, at The University of Akron and at Columbia University in New York City. He holds a master of arts degree in adult education from New York University and was awarded an honorary doctor of public service degree by Rio Grande College, Ohio, in 1969. From 1945-1964 he served as executive director of the Akron Community Services Center and Urban League. He became regional director of the Mideastern Regional Office of the National Urban League from 1964-1972. Brown's wife, Edith, an artist, provided two paintings for Main Library's permanent collection.

Brown was honored by his fellow trustees for his twenty-four years of service and for "his

calm voice of reason” at a reception on October 26, 1993, at the Akron City Club. At that time the trustees named the Main Library second floor reading lounge "The Raymond R. Brown Reading Lounge," in his honor.

Walter E. deBruin, Sr.

Walter E. deBruin, Sr. , retired in 1980 after 26 years of service to the library. Appointed in 1953, he served as board secretary from 1958-1962 and again from 1968-1974. He was president from 1962-1966. The Library Building Bond Issue was approved during his tenure, and he chaired the construction committee for the new building. It was he who dealt directly with water at the site, the toppling Bear building and construction of the new facility. Perhaps former librarian R. Russell Munn knew best the kind of time deBruin gave to the library. Munn mentioned “the endless hours that he spent with architects, real estate agents, city planners and others” without ever losing his patience, never losing his temper, and always exercising sound judgment. He developed a grievance system for the library and researched library retirement systems before leaving the board.

DeBruin graduated from Ohio State University and joined Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company's legal department in 1930. After forty years there, he was associated with Buckingham, Doolittle and Burroughs for nine years. DeBruin was honored by the library for his service at a luncheon on April 19, 1980 at the Akron Woman's City Club.

Allen F. Killings, D.D.S

Appointed to the library board in 1968, Dr. Killings served for twenty-four years, retiring in 1992. He served as president of the board from 1976-1983. Killings was a graduate of Akron, Ohio, Central High School, Florida Agriculture & Mechanical University in Tallahassee where he was a football star, and of Howard University Dental School in Washington, D.C. Because of his football prowess, he was inducted into the Summit County Sports Hall of Fame in October, 1986. He was the recipient in 1978 of the Absalom Jones Community Service Award from St. Philip's Episcopal Church, given to those who exemplify the principles of Christian community service. Besides serving as vestryman at St. Philip's Church, Killings was a board member of the Akron Community Service Center and Urban League and of Old Trail School; trustee of Channelwood Day Care Center, past president of Frontiers, International, member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, and treasurer of Alpha Phi Alpha Homes, Inc.

Elizabeth Ricketts

Elizabeth Ricketts (Mrs. Edward M.) was appointed to the library Board of Trustees in 1969. She served the board for many years as secretary and briefly in 1993 as vice president. She succeeded Lulu H. Smith, Garfield High School English teacher, who completed a seven-year term on the board. Ricketts was English resource teacher for the public schools at the time of her appointment. She had previously taught English at Garfield High School and at West Junior High School. A native of Akron, Ricketts attended Kenmore High School. She has a bachelor's degree from Denison University in Granville, Ohio and a master's degree from Ohio State University in Columbus.

In 1967 Ricketts was president of the Summit County Association of Teachers of English; she planned programs from 1967-1969 for the Northeastern Ohio Teachers' Association. She is a life member of the National Education Association, a member of the National Council of Teachers of English, the English Association of Ohio, Ohio Education Association, and the American Education Association. Ricketts resigned from the board in October, 1993 following a move to Jeromesville, Ohio.

Vesta M. Ritzman

Vesta Ritzman served on the Akron Public Library board from 1948 to 1965 and was the first woman to serve as president from 1953-1961. Her husband, Albert R. Ritzman, served on the Akron school board for twenty-two years. He died in 1946. Ritzman did not stand in her husband's shadow, however. During the 1950s and 1960s she wrote, made costumes for, and directed an interdenominational Easter sunrise pageant sponsored by the Council of Churches. The pageant was held at Loew's Theater (now the Akron Civic Theater) and involved more than a hundred young people who participated in the celebration.

Ritzman was devoted to library matters and the friends she had made on the Board of Trustees. In 1980, when she was ninety years old and blind, Ritzman attended the retirement luncheon for her long-time associate, Walter deBruin. Because she was an active member of so many organizations, she carried the library's concerns into all corners of the community. She was a member, Sunday school teacher and deacon of Trinity United Church of Christ, and past worthy matron of the Order of Eastern Star, Fernleaf Chapter, mother advisor of the Rainbow Girls and past noble grand of Malo Rebekkah Lodge. She was state chairman of fine arts for the Federation of Women's Clubs and past president of Rotary Anns, Merriman Hills Garden Club and the Fortnightly Study Club. She died in February, 1983, at the age of 93. Born Vesta Heminger, she was the daughter of M.C. Heminger, real estate businessman, for whom Heminger Elementary School was named.

Frank W. Steere, Jr.

When his term expired on May 14, 1988, Frank W. Steere, Jr., asked that he not be reappointed to the board which he had served since 1958. With the library for thirty years and eleven months, Steere was a member of the Finance Committee, the Buildings and Grounds Committee, and was president of the board from 1967-1976. During his tenure Steere oversaw the library's move to Main Street; its change from a school district to county district library; the opening of two new branches, McDowell and Green, as well as the relocation of Northfield, Richfield, Tallmadge and Norton Branches. While he served on the board, the library passed its first temporary operating levy in its 110 year history and developed with other libraries in the county a trustees' formula for the distribution of tax monies to all libraries in the county. Steere was a past president of the Ohio Library Trustees Association and was recipient of the Bert A. Polsky Humanitarian Award in 1981. He was founder and chairman of Steere Enterprises, a Tallmadge plastics company. Following a testimonial dinner in Steere's honor, the High Street court, encompassing the Kate Clapp garden, was named "The Frank W. Steere, Jr. Courtyard." In 1989 Steere received the Ohio Library Association's Hall

of Fame Trustee Award “for outstanding service” to the Akron-Summit County Public Library and to the state library system.

Chapter 14

Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Libraries of Akron and Summit County were founded April 19, 1953, when an organizational meeting was held at The Akron Woman's City Club. Sixteen people attended. Robert Kyle was elected the first president (see appendix for list of presidents). Membership was open to all at one dollar per year. Frank M. Whiteman followed Kyle. Then Emma Holloway Shreffler (Mrs. James H.) served as president of the Friends for five years between 1957 and 1962. A lifelong reader, Shreffler remembered going to the public library with her parents when the library was located in the Masonic Temple at Howard and Mill Streets in downtown Akron. Shreffler was also active in musical organizations in Akron and was a founder of the local Y. W. C. A. Because Emma Holloway Shreffler so wanted the library to have a piano, Mr. and Mrs. John S. Knight donated their Steinway grand to the new Main Library when the building was opened in 1969.

In 1980 Shreffler returned the resolution honoring her dedication to the library which had been given to her at the September 11, 1969 Board of Trustees meeting. At that time she was a resident at Copeland Oaks, a retirement community in Sebring, Ohio, and was concerned with the preservation of her award. She died at the age of 103 on February 4, 1986. The Friends of the Library provided \$6,000 in the year she died to establish a collection of plays, classic films, operas, ballets, and books for children on video and audio cassettes, to be named in Shreffler's honor.

Following Shreffler from 1963-1965 and serving again in 1970-1972 was William J. Worrell, executive vice president of the Bearfoot Sole Corporation in Wadsworth. Because he coordinated the successful passage of the bond issue to build the new library, Worrell received the 1964 Citizen of the Year Award from the Ohio Library Association. Worrell also headed the Friends campaign to raise funds for art items to be used in the new library. During Worrell's presidency, the Friends joined with the library board to say "thank you" to the many people who had contributed books, records, films, money or time to help the library through a financially difficult period following the opening of the new building. The June 15, 1971 party attracted 500 people who drank tea and studied a photography exhibit provided by *Akron Beacon Journal* photographers. Katherine Evans of Technical Processes and Elaine Bingman of Publicity/Display played the Knight piano. Worrell died on September 23, 1977 in Milan, Italy. In his memory the Friends provided a \$1,500 gift to begin the William Worrell Collection for Young Adults. The selection of fiction and non-

fiction was divided into seventeen sets placed in branch libraries and rotated every two months.

As originally organized, the Friends of the Libraries of Akron and Summit County offered fund-raising assistance and other kinds of help to the then-Akron Public Library and its branches. On May 22, 1964, the group renamed itself Friends of the Library; in May, 1974, the name was changed again to reflect the shift of the library system from a school district library to a county public library. The name was cumbersome but descriptive: Friends of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. During the first twenty-one years of existence, the Friends of the Library represented the city branches as well as Main Library. Some county branches, most of them begun through community action, had long had support groups in their individual communities. This local support was to continue as new county branches opened. In 1978 the library's *Annual Report* remarked that "the library encourages the formation of Friends groups." Minutes for the January, 1982 Friends meeting reported that Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director, "reintroduced the subject of permitting various branch libraries to form their own Friends groups if they desire." The discussion which followed included whether an umbrella group from all the branch Friends should be organized, and whether branches with Friends groups should receive allocations from the Main Library group, whether the library administration should continue to give the Main Library group discards for its book sale. Given a green light, branches quickly organized their own Friends groups, leaving the Friends of the Akron-Summit County Public Library to represent Main Library only. At the same time, the branches organized their own book sales.

The original Friends of the Library held their first used, discarded and donated book sale on October 21, 1972 at Summit Mall. Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.) had, since she joined the Friends board, agitated continuously for a fund raiser for the organization and had settled on a book sale as the appropriate event. When she became president of the board in 1972, she set about making the book sale a reality. The event on October 21, 1972 was pretty real. There were no tables for the books which were organized in boxes in the middle of the mall floor. Browsers and buyers crawled around amidst the boxes to make their selections. At ten cents for paperbacks and twenty-five cents for hardbacks, the books were worth a bit of discomfort. The November 1972 *Owlet* noted: "The distinguished looking man surveyed the boxes of books piled haphazardly in the Summit Mall concourse, the crowds of people scrambling through them, and said to Joann Blair,

"Madame, are you the chairman of this organization? I would like to say that this is the most disorganized book sale I have ever seen in my life!"

Blair replied, "Sir, I am the chairman, and I couldn't agree with you more!"

Disorganized or not, Blair and the Friends of the Library raised \$1,017 for library use during the book sale. "We think we'll have another book sale next year," commented Blair, "but better organized."

The Friends continued the sale, shifting it first to Rolling Acres Mall, and then to Chapel Hill Mall on Halloween weekend, moving the books to tables with considerably more library organization, and raising in total by the end of 1993 more than \$125,000. These funds were distributed to Main Library and branches for items that were needed but couldn't be purchased with public money. One of the first petty cash items approved was for coffee money throughout the

system so that library groups having meetings of any kind could offer coffee to their guests without the need for the librarians to take the money out of their own pockets. Other purchases included books, records, films, tape cassettes, paintings and display cases. The Friends raised \$2,500 for the Lietzke fountain installed in front of West Hill Branch Library and they sponsored appearances by authors and poets. One of the writers who drew a crowd of 200 Friends was Elaine L. Konigsburg, author of the Newbery Award-winning *From the Mixed-up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. Though the new Main Street library was open at the time of the May 23, 1969 meeting, there was no space for such a large gathering. The luncheon and lecture were moved to the library's one-time home, the Akron Art Institute.

Margaret Dalsky (Mrs. Karl) would never agree to serve as president of the Friends but was always willing to serve as vice president, making arrangements for luncheons, dinners and meetings at the Akron Woman's City Club of which she was a member. She was the Friends' first treasurer and quietly provided niceties for the organization, among them a four-foot handmade Russian lace tablecloth to be used at the library on formal occasions. Dalsky had a familial interest in the library. Her father, Louis Seybold, served as president of the library board from 1898 to 1902. He was a man of considerable power and influence in the community. In addition to his memberships in the Odd Fellows, the Elks, the German Club, the Liedertafel, Turn Verein, German Rifle Club and Pilsener Club among others, he became editor and proprietor in 1875 of the German language paper, *Germania (Centennial History of Summit County and Representative Citizens, 1908; p. 350)*. Seybold's daughter was on hand in hat and gloves to serve birthday cake to patrons at Main Library on March 1, 1974, the day the library completed its one hundredth year. Following Dalsky's death in 1982, her husband, Karl Dalsky, underwrote a program at Hower House featuring the Ohio Light Opera Company of Wooster under the direction of Dr. James Stuart. The Large Print Book Collection, developed with funds from the Friends, was designated the Margaret Dalsky Memorial Collection. Following Karl Dalsky's death on January 29, 1986, the Friends asked that the collection refer to both husband and wife in the title.

By 1980, the library's financial difficulties indicated a need for a temporary operating levy to maintain salaries, services, and buildings at appropriate levels. The Librarian-Director requested that funds from the Main Library Friends' book sales be set aside for a levy campaign in 1984 since, as ever, public money could not be used for political purposes. This was done in 1984 and again in 1989 when a second levy was successfully passed.

Questions concerning the legality of what the Friends were doing were raised in 1983. Frank H. Harvey, Jr., an attorney with Brouse & McDowell, was asked to explore the advantages of creating a 501(c) (3) tax exempt foundation status for the Friends of the Akron-Summit County Public Library. After much discussion by the library board and the Friends about Articles of Incorporation and Code of Regulations for a foundation, nothing was done. However, by 1991, scheduling problems involving branch book sales and potential difficulties with the Internal Revenue Service pushed the diverse Friends groups to join together in a Council of Friends Groups of the Akron-Summit County Public Library, Inc. The stated purpose of the new organization, which held its first annual meeting on July 23, 1993 at Main Library, was to share information,

coordinate plans for book sales and other fund-raising functions, and meet federal and state tax reporting requirements as a group. To do this, the Council treasurer would file with the IRS each year for all member Friends groups. The book sales would have to be coordinated so that sales were held on not more than six calendar days each year to meet state sales tax requirements. Frank H. Harvey, Jr. and Richard Battagline, attorneys with Brouse & McDowell, developed the incorporation papers. Their fee of \$5,038.36 was paid by the Main Library Friends. The Council itself was granted a 501(c)(3) non-profit tax status. The individual Friends groups received 501(c)(4) tax status, allowing them to contribute funds to library levy campaigns and participate in legislative issues involving libraries. Gifts to individual Friends groups were declared to be not tax deductible.

Officers elected for the new Council were Martha Bray, Main Library, president; Polly Price, Portage Lakes, vice-president; Emalou Brumfield, Nordonia Hills, secretary; and Ophelia Bell, West Hill, treasurer.

Throughout the years the Friends sponsored many programs of interest to the reading public. In addition to the appearance of the Ohio Light Opera Company, the Friends sponsored Tanya Griffith, a local minister's wife portraying Queen Victoria on Victoria Day on May 23, 1983. In 1984 Jim Trelease, author of *The Read Aloud Handbook*, talked to parents about the need to read aloud to children and then proceeded to do so, regardless of the age of his audience. He also showed a film, "Reading Aloud: Motivating Children to Make Books into Friends, Not Enemies." From The University of Akron in 1970 came historian Dr. George W. Knepper who talked about his new book, *New Lamps for Old*, which chronicled the first one hundred years of The University of Akron, and Dr. Allen G. Noble, geography professor, who spoke in 1985 about his favorite topics: houses, barns, and farm structures which created the North American settlement landscape. Jane Dunlap (Mrs. James F.), writer, lecturer and playwright, discussed "The Tribulations of a Playwright" in 1971. Billed as "author-humorist-poet", Janet Henry regaled the Friends in 1981 with tales of her family and her experiences as wife and mother. Author of a syndicated newspaper column, "Poems on Parenthood" and books with such titles as *And So to Bedlam* and *This Side of Sanity*, Henry provided a program which featured guffaws and giggles.

Local columnist Frances B. Murphey drew a standing-room only crowd in 1989 when she presented her slide show, "In and Outhouses I have Known."

In 1991 "A Tour for a Summer Afternoon" offered Friends an opportunity to visit the old Carnegie Library, the law offices of Roetzel & Andress; the Akron Art Museum which was originally a post office; and the Trianon Ballroom, once the home of the Akron Woman's City Club. James Pahlau, instructor of public and residential architecture courses at The University of Akron, was the walking tour guide. It did not rain! Other programs presented Linnea Martin, Associate Dean of Admissions at Hiram College, an expert on the fictional female detective, Nancy Drew, and her many authors (1992); and Linda H. Bauer, editor of *The New American Sampler Cookbook* published by Kent State University Press (1993). The cookbook featured recipes from the President of the United States, and members of the Senate and House of Representatives.

Steven Hawk, Librarian-Director, requested funding from the Friends for staff service awards in 1981. He pointed out that such awards were items for which library funds could not be

used. He was getting little cooperation from the Main Library Friends board. So he wrote a three page letter to be discussed at the January 11, 1982, meeting requesting funding for the service awards and explaining his reasons. Total cost of the awards would range between \$2,300 and \$2,800, over half of the funds brought in by the yearly book sale. Hawk prevailed when he agreed to ask the library board for a matching sum from the Chamberlain Fund.

Catherine Taliaferro (Mrs. O. D.) became president of the Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library in 1986. Because there was some feeling of ill will among members of the Friends board concerning financial requests, Taliaferro organized a one-day retreat at the Akron Woman's City Club to help smooth out some of the problems still existing. Dr. Velma E. Pomerence, Associate Professor in the Community and Technical College at The University of Akron, led the discussions. Luncheon was paid for from the memorial money given to the Friends by Karl Dalsky in memory of his wife, Margaret. Dalsky said, in providing the stipend, that the Friends should use the money for "fun." Lunch was very good, everyone enjoyed themselves, and the workshop proved useful.

In 1988 the Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library funded a demonstration project at Portage Path School to encourage third and fourth graders to write poetry. Alice Klayman (Mrs. Maxwell) was the energetic chairman. She engaged Dr. Kenneth Koch, Columbia University professor and author of *Wishes, Lies and Dreams*, to assist the in-classroom tutorial efforts of four local poets: Wendy Duke, Mark Lange, Beth Leslie, and Jean Slemboski. The following year Koch came to Akron for an all-day workshop during National Library Week to help teachers and other adult leaders learn successful techniques for using poetry in school classes. As a result of these programs, the Friends won an award in 1989 from the Friends of Libraries USA in the category of "most literary appeal."

Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library sponsored their first Snowflake Sampler in 1990. The program included a series of instructional sessions on holiday how-to-do's plus films, stories, cookies and clowns for the children. Barbara Hiney, (Mrs. Kenneth), owner of the Book Hound (Quaker Square book store), and library staff member Betsy Manderen talked about new books for holiday giving; cateress Sandra M. St. John demonstrated innovative ways to decorate a festive table. St. John also prepared hors d' oeuvres for the 300 people who attended. Marci Boester of Boxes Plus offered gift-wrapping techniques, and Frances B. Murphey, *Akron Beacon Journal* columnist and reporter, gave tips on taking special family photographs. Tours of the Main Library drew an amazing number of interested patrons, considering that the building was at that time twenty-one years old.

During the Snowflake Sampler program, Murphey was honored for her continuing reportage on the library and its events, which began in 1945. Murphey became the first lifetime member of all the Friends groups in the Akron-Summit County Public Library system.

When a program is a success, why change it? The Snowflake Sampler was held in 1991, timed to coincide with the WAKR-Akron Recreation Department's "Welcome to Santa" parade in downtown Akron. The 1991 program featured a cooking demonstration of the Greek specialty dish, spanakopeta, by retired *Akron Beacon Journal* "Around Town" and foods editor, Polly Paffilas; Richard Alford from The University of Akron created an ice sculpture on the third floor balcony

where the cold weather kept it from melting. Staff members discussed good books for holiday giving, and Kevin Delagrange juggled for the children. Instead of tours of the library, individual instruction was offered to patrons unsure of how to use The Library Machine (TLM.) A third Snowflake Sampler was held in 1992 - at East Branch Library. Construction of the downtown John S. Knight Convention Center and subsequent lack of parking were reasons for the change of locale. Magician Patrick Hartory and harpist Monique Mason entertained. In 1993, the program returned to Main Library. Guests took tours of the building and studied its art work, heard talks on package wrapping, holiday meals, care of gift plants, and craft items to make and take. Programs for children were held simultaneously. Members of the Akron Youth Symphony and the Akron Symphony Chorus entertained, followed by a "petting zoo" of orchestra instruments for the children. Co-sponsors with the Friends were the library and the Akron Symphony Mini Maestro Club for Kids.

Theatricals for children were also sponsored by the Main Library Friends. North Carolina Folk Tellers, Connie Regan-Blake and Barbara Freeman, wove their magic tales from Southern Appalachia for large audiences in 1992. The following year Sarah McCoy of Dayton, Ohio told tales too; hers included examples of African folk tales. Another group sponsored by the Friends was Madcap Productions, a puppet company which featured giant puppets that pulled audience members into the action. The Indiana University Opera Theater and Illusion Factory were also included in this season. "Alice In Wonderland" presented by ArtReach of Cincinnati, Ohio, opened the 1993-1994 Children's Theater Series at Main Library. The touring company turned the book into a brightly costumed musical with audience participation encouraged. The Illusion Factory of Akron brought its production of Richard Kinter's "The Golden Goose" to Main Library in February, 1994. Sets, costumes, song and dance routines entertained children and their parents. The free entertainment was also sponsored by the Main Library Friends.

Meanwhile, friends throughout the system provided funding support, art works, books and helping hands whenever necessary. Whether Friends or just friends, the library could not do without these energetic and devoted people.

Appendix A

MISSION STATEMENT **Akron-Summit County Public Library** **August 30, 1979**

The basic function of a public library is to provide information, materials, facilities, and services to the people of the community.

The mission of the Akron-Summit County Public Library is to provide every person, regardless of age, sex, education, language, religion, ethnic or cultural background, and mental or physical health, with effective access to the human record so that informational, educational, and recreational needs are met.

In attempting to fulfill this mission, the Akron-Summit County Public Library states the following as its goals:

1. To serve as a multi-purpose organization, providing a wide variety of resource materials, both print and non-print, to meet the needs and desires of individuals and groups for information, knowledge, and ideas.
2. To secure funds for library operation.
3. To stimulate and encourage children, young people, adults, and senior citizens to accept the concept of lifetime learning and to use the resources of the library in their continuing education.
4. To seek out individuals and groups which are not aware of the library and its materials.
5. To cooperate with groups and agencies to promote and support educational, cultural, and social awareness activities in the community and to participate in the search for solutions to community problems.
6. To take a leadership role in coordinating the acquisition policies of libraries and information agencies, since no one repository can be expected to preserve all significant and representative materials in all forms at all levels.
7. To integrate the library into the social, cultural, and educational fabric of this community.

Appendix B

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY LIBRARIAN-DIRECTORS, 1874-1994

1874-1875	Theron A. Noble
1875-1882	Horton Wright
1882-1889	Joseph A. Beebe
1889-1920	Mary Pauline Edgerton
1920-1927	Maude Herndon
1927-1929	Herbert S. Hirshberg
1929-1944	Will H. Collins
1944-1967	R. Russell Munn
1967-1980	John H. Rebenack
1980—	Steven Hawk

Appendix C

ARTISTS REPRESENTED AT OPENING

David G. Barr	Ceramic clock sculpture
Martha Boyajian	Painting
Edith Brown	Paintings (two)
Emily Bukovec	Wall hanging (<i>It's a pencil</i>)
Inez Crisp	Watercolor
Fern Cole	Pots (six)
Robert Culley	Metaphysical boxes (six)
Robert Davis	Painting
Jerry Domokur	Collage
Don Drumm	Wall sculpture
	<i>Garden of Fantasy</i> stabile
Julius Faysash	Construction
Leroy Flint	Mobile (<i>Flock of Birds</i>)
Hazel Janicki	Magic door
Richard Kish	Painting
Harold Kitner	Painting
Jody Klein	Wooden dividing wall
Luke and Rolland Lietzke	Ceramic Dream Wall screen
Mary Ellen McDermott	Enamel (<i>Descent</i>)
Marc Moon	Painting (<i>Ira Road</i>)
Barbara Morrow	Prints (<i>Lion, Sunflower</i>)
Robert Morrow	<i>Birth of Athena</i> mural
David Muck	Painting (<i>Untitled</i>)
Elmer Novotny	R.Russell Munn portrait
Joseph O' Sickey	Painting
Miska Petersham	Pots (two)
Frances W. Robinson	Woodland stitcheries (six)
Dan Rohn	Print (<i>Peninsula Quarry</i>)
William Schock	Painting
Ian Short	Prints (two)
James M. Someroski	Hangings (two)
Karen Swanson	Woven tapestry wall hanging
Ron Taylor	Painting
Harry Wheeler	<i>Garden Trio</i> teak wall sculpture
Robert Wick	<i>Water Venus</i> fountain
Lucella Smith Wiley	Print

Artist Unknown

Mountain Scape

Other items:

Lithographic view of Akron, 1870 by Albert Ruger

Map of Ohio, 1837, published by Lewis Robinson & Company

Advertising lithograph of the Empire Binder, Seiberling & Company

Thai Temple Rubbings

Playmakers, East Indian wall hanging

Landscape, Butterfly, Peruvian hangings

Scene from *Once a Mouse*, linen print

Tekke Bokhara prayer rug, gift of Maude Herndon

Steinway grand piano, gift of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Knight

Appendix D

TIME CAPSULE CONTENTS

Letters: 1) To the Mayor of Akron in the Year 2025, from John S. Ballard, Mayor. 2) Greetings to Akronites of the 21st Century from Ray Kapper, President, Akron City Council together with a list of Council members. 3) To the Akron Bicentennial Generation, from Fred I. Albrecht, President, Akron Sesquicentennial, Inc. 4) To Officers and Trustees of the Akron Bicentennial Committee, from Vincent H. Johnson, President, U.S. Bicentennial/Akron, and John E. Kaiser, Executive Director, Akron Sesqui and U.S. Bicentennial/Akron committees.

Souvenir Programs (3) —Akron Sesquicentennial

Sesquicentennial Editions, *Akron Beacon Journal*, June 29-July 4, 1975

Sesquicentennial Calendar of Events and other publications of the Akron Sesquicentennial committee.

Akron Sesquicentennial Memorabilia: Official flag, commemorative plates; bronze medal; "Simon Perkins" ceramic statue

Akron and Summit County, by Karl H. Grismer; 1975 reprint of the book originally published by the Summit County Historical Society in August, 1952

Yesterday's Akron, by Kenneth Nichols, 1975

An Ohio Portrait, by Dr. George W. Knepper, 1976

Historic Tour of Akron, Ohio, pamphlet and map compiled in 1975 by The Junior League of Akron, with the assistance of the Summit County Historical Society and the University of Akron Geography Department

AKRON in business...since 1807 by Fred C. Bock

Old Portage Trail Review, bulletin of the Summit County Historical Society: April and October, 1974; February and October, 1975; February and October, 1976. William V. Wallace, Jr. editor. *City at the Summit*, the 1975 Akron Sesquicentennial Film; Jack E. Gieck, producer (first release print).

***City at the Summit*, a flyer describing the film**

Summit County Historical Calendars, 1975 and 1976

Bicentennial Edition, *Akron Beacon Journal*, July 4, 1976

100 Historical Pages from the *Akron Beacon Journal*; Bicentennial souvenir book

Akron-Summit County Public Library Centennial Packet

U.S. Bicentennial Coins and Currency: dollar, half-dollar, and quarter-dollar donated by C. Colmery Gibson, executive director, Akron Regional Development Board; two-dollar bill, donated by William V. Wallace, Jr., director, Summit County Historical Society.

1975 Akron Telephone Directory

***1976 Akron City Directory* donated by Byron W. Bowman, President of Burch Directory Company.**

A copy of the *Reporter* newspaper

Film taken on the day of placement of capsule by a *Beacon Journal* photographer

Tape of Akron Labor Council Committee Meeting Minutes, August 23, 1976

***Historical Contributions of Akron's Black Residents from 1825 through 1975* by Shirla R. McClain, Ph.D., University of Akron, Spring 1976**

Appendix E

DEVELOPMENT OF BRANCH LIBRARIES

- 1905 Collection of 50 volumes placed in First Congregational Sunday School, other churches and Fire Engine House #4.
- 1920 Firestone Branch opens on September 13, 1920 in a room donated by Firestone Tire & Rubber Company.
- 1922 East Branch opens on August 15, 1922 in a room at 22 Goodyear Boulevard in the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company Club House.
- 1923 Wooster Branch opens November 10, 1923 in old Water Works building at 456 Wooster Avenue.
- 1927 North Branch opens December 2, 1927 in a store front at 202 East Cuyahoga Falls Avenue.
- 1929 Firestone Park Branch opens on November 1, 1929 at 353 Reed Avenue.
- 1930 West Hill Branch opens on January 18, 1930 in a residence at 789 West Market Street.
- 1930 Kenmore Branch opens May 30, 1930 in the C.A. Wagner building at 957 Kenmore Boulevard with Fortnightly Club as staff.
- 1932 Fairlawn Sub-branch opens on November 1, 1932 in school building at 2074 West Market Street, in 1993 the Fairlawn Park Garden and Civic Center.
- 1936 Ellet Branch opens on December 7, 1936 in a remodeled store room at 604 Canton Road.
- 1938 Maple Valley Branch opens on August 19, 1938 in former school building at 1303 Copley Road.
- 1938 Firestone Branch moves to former Firestone Post Office building from the third floor of the Firestone Recreational Hall.
- 1939 East Branch, built to library specifications, opens on January 29, 1939 at 60 Goodyear Boulevard on land donated by Goodyear Tire & Rubber Company.

- 1950 **Richfield Branch opens on June 18, 1950 at 3903 Broadview Road in Richfield.**
- 1951 **Chamberlain Branch opens October 28, 1951 at 760 East Archwood Avenue.**
- 1953 **Ellet Branch dedicates new building at 485 Canton Road on January 11, 1953.**
- 1953 **Maple Valley Branch moves to renovated Hull's Restaurant on Copley Road.**
- 1953 **Richfield Branch opens small collection in rented quarters.**
- 1953 **Northfield Branch opens small collection in rented quarters.**
- 1954 **Wooster Branch moves to present library at 600 Wooster Road.**
- 1954 **Northfield Branch opens in August, 1954 at 9390 Olde Eight Road.**
- 1956 **West Hill Branch moves to new building at 807 West Market Street in March, 1956.**
- 1956 **Kenmore Branch moves into present library at 2200 14th Street SW, dedicating building on January 13, 1957.**
- 1958 **Ayres Branch opens on January 19, 1958 in brick home at 1765 West Market Street willed by Dr. Floyd F. Ayres.**
- 1958 **North Branch moves to new building at 183 East Cuyahoga Falls Avenue with dedication on October 26, 1958.**
- 1958 **Maple Valley Branch opens in new building at 1293 Copley Road with dedication on January 12, 1958.**
- 1961 **Tallmadge Branch established at 8 South- East Avenue on March 20, 1961.**
- 1961 **Manchester Branch established at 951 West Nimisila Road on September 24, 1961.**
- 1962 **Coventry Branch opens on January 29, 1962 at 3515 Manchester Road.**

- 1964 Northfield Branch moves into new building at 9458 Olde Eight Road in Northfield Center with dedication on December 13, 1964.
- 1964 Bath Library opens in old house on Ira Road.
- 1965 Ayres Branch addition is completed.
- 1966 Bath Library becomes part of Akron Public Library System.
- 1966 Mogadore Branch has open house on October 16, 1966 in donated bank building at 1 South Cleveland Avenue.
- 1967 Bath Branch opens Book Barn on branch property for children's activities.
- 1968 Firestone Branch closes November 29, 1968 after 48 years of service.
- 1969 Norton Branch opens on June 9, 1969 at 4071 South Cleveland-Massillon Road.
- 1971 McDowell Branch opens on December 6, 1971 at 3101 Smith Road.
- 1977 Tallmadge Branch moves into new building at 32 South Avenue with dedication on February 6, 1977.
- 1979 Green Branch opens on March 19, 1979 in remodeled fire station at 4759 Massillon Road.
- 1981 Richfield Branch opens in new building at 4300 West Streetsboro Road on June 1, 1981.
- 1988 Norton Branch opens in new building at 3930 South Cleveland-Massillon Road on May 2, 1988.
- 1990 Portage Lakes Branch opens July 9, 1990 at 4261 Manchester Road, combining the services of Manchester and Coventry Branches.
- 1991 Northfield Branch changes name to Nordonia Hills Branch on February 7, 1991.

Appendix F

CHAMBERLAIN SCHOLARS

Recipients of the James W. Chamberlain Scholarships given by Akron-Summit County Public Library are the following:

1948	Marjorie C. Fouts	1970	Judy Campbell Rosenberg
1949	Ann Moskovis	1974	David Carver
1950	Mary K. Wohlford	1976	Diana M. Berry
1951	Irene Kincheloe	1976	Thomas H. DuFore
1952	Sara Lindsay	1980	Ronald Brent Jones
1953	Eve McKinstry Wagner	1981	Mary Jo Seib
1955	Marcia Carlsten	1982	Arlene Ursick
1955	Ellen Margolis	1982	Peggy Zdila
1956	Waldeen Leora Oglesby	1982	Karen Zeleznick
1958	George Aguirre	1983	Sheila Gabriel
1959	Mildred Wright	1983	Kay Averette
1960	Ray Barber	1985	Catherine Lynn Brown
1962	Neil Yerkey	1985	Marian Mullally Davies
1963	Ann Mikalashak	1986	Michelle Theresa Churma
1963	Constance Van Tilburg	1986	Diane Jackson
1964	J. Joann Blair	1992	Iris R. Bolar
1965	Patricia Crabbe	1992	Ann E. Hutchison
1967	Patricia White	1992	Donald E. Peoples
1968	Linda Shaw		

Chamberlain Scholarships are not offered every year. Reasons for this include no suitable applicants or no prospective job in the Akron-Summit County Public Library system for the candidate upon graduation.

Appendix G

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION, 1969

Librarian	John H. Rebenack
Assistant Librarians	
Branches and Extension	Ronald C. Tollafield
Main Library	Luanna Stahlecker
Technical Processes	Mary Elizabeth Earle
Clerk-Treasurer	Frances A. Krieger
Deputy Clerk	Rhea Mateer
Departments and Offices	
Bookmobiles and Stations:	Marie Graves
Assistant	Edith Booster
Building Superintendent	Stanley Kunas
Children's Services:	Virginia Farmer
Assistant	Mildred Wright
Group Services:	
Adult Education	Betty Hollingsworth
Film Bureau	Betty Pavlov
Publicity/Display	Margaret J. Dietz
Art	Lucella Wiley
Technical Processes:	Mary Elizabeth Earle
Cataloging	Panola Coulter
Bindery	Katherine C. Evans
Main Library Divisions	
Business, Labor, Government	Lulu B. Hardesty
Circulation	Helen Albertson
Fine Arts and Music	Donald P. Holloway
Record Section	G. Ward Evans
Information	John Bender
Language, Literature, History	Warren Skidmore
Main Children's Room	Margaret Pollock
Philosophy, Religion, Education	Norma North
Science and Technology	Curtice G. Myers
City Branches	
Ayres	Margot Jackson
Chamberlain	Wilma Batcheldor
East	Mary Ann Smith
Ellet	Aileen Chrisp

**Kenmore
Maple Valley
North
West Hill
Wooster**

County Branches

**Bath
Coventry
Manchester
Mogadore
Northfield
Norton
Richfield
Tallmadge**

**Elinor Earle
Helen Stahler
Katherine Flint
Hugh Saviers
Laurel Fischer**

**Marie Domanski
Barbara Schwalbach
Marcella Teeple
Ila Masters
Ann Rhode
Rita Karlo
Virginia Kunas
Juliet Phillips**

Appendix H

LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION, 1994

Librarian-Director

Clerk-Treasurer

Deputy Clerk

Deputy Clerk

Librarian-Assistant Director for Automated and Technical Services

Librarian-Assistant Director for Public Service

Service Coordinator, Branch and Mobile Services

Service Coordinator, Main Library

Service Coordinator, Youth Services

Departments and Offices

Building Superintendent

Community Relations

Mobile Services

Personnel

Main Library

Audio Visual Services

Business Labor Government

Circulation

Fine Arts and Recreation

Philosophy Religion Education

Language Literature History

Main Children's Room

Science and Technology

Branch Libraries

Ayres

Chamberlain

East

Ellet

Green

Kenmore

McDowell

Maple Valley

Mogadore

Steven Hawk

Barbara Miller

Sandra Buckner

Eloise Eberly

Diane C. Winans

Olga Yogmour

Carl Beery

David Jennings

Judith Rosenberg

Daniel Chinrock

Patricia H. Latshaw

Karen Steiner

Pamela B. Crawford

Richard Ewing

Dana Beezley-

Kwasnicka

Bruce Spohn, Jr.

Karla Steward

Kathryne Averette

Sylvia Leddon

Ione Cowen

Joyce McKnight

Andria Caynon

Barbara Halfen

Catherine Clements

Anita Marky

Mary Miller

Katherine Forsthoffer

Jill Stroud

Jacqueline Johns

Janet Han

**North
Nordia Hills
Norton
Portage Lakes
Richfield
Tallmadge
West Hill
Wooster**

**Rosemarie Foord
Janet Stavole
Cynthia Howe
Susan Rice
Elizabeth Reed
Karen Wiper
Robert Ethington
Diane Jackson**

Appendix I

STAFF ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTS

1952-53	Dorothy Tricker	1972-73	Rhudell Dresser
1953-54	Geraldine Crano	1973-74	Grace Scott
1954-55	Irene Kuichlee	1974-75	Edith Cleveland
1955-56	Mabel Twining	1975-76	Evelyn Wagner
1956-57	Ronald Tollafeld	1976-77	Nan Johnston
1957-58	Wilma Batcheldor	1977-78	Jacque Johns
1958-59	Wilma Batcheldor	1978-79	Robert McKay (to February '79)
1959-60	Nancy Miller (resigned August'59)	1979-80	Olga Yogmour
1959-60	Wilma Batcheldor	1979-80	Christopher Bowen
1960-61	Lulu Hardesty	1980-81	Katie Achorn
1961-62	Lulu Hardesty	1981-82	Mary Ann Hoyt
1962-63	Warren Skidmore	1982-83	Thomas Dufore
1963-64	Dorothy Sykes	1983-84	Cynthia Howe
1964-65	Neil Yerkey	1984-85	David Jennings
1965-66	Helen Stahler	1985-86	Janet Stavole
1966-67	Dorothy Tricker	1986-87	Elizabeth Reed
1967-68	William Johnson	1987-88	Sheila Gabriel
1968-69	John Bender	1988-89	Robert Ethington
1969-70	Margaret Dietz	1989-91	C. Allen Nichols
1970-71	Hugh Saviers	1991-92	Joel Anyim
1971-72	Jean Wiedemer	1992-94	Ione Cowen

Appendix J

AKRON PUBLIC LIBRARY

AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Presidents of Board of Trustees
(1874 to present)

John R. Buchtel	1874-1877
Milton W. Henry	1877-1879
Edwin P. Green	1879-1882
Rev. Thomas E. Monroe	1882-1883
Noah A. Carter	1883-1884
Calvin P. Humphrey	1884-1886
Frank M. Atterholt	1886-1887
Charles R. Grant	1887-1888
Olin L. Sadler	1888-1890
Charles R. Grant	1890-1895
Wilson B. Cannon	1895-1896
H. C. Corson	1896-1897
Fred C. Bryan	1897-1898
Louis Seybold	1898-1902
John C. Frank	1902-1906
William T. Vaughan	1906-1916
Jesse P. Dice	1916-1918
H. L. Snyder	1918-1920
Jesse P. Dice	1920-1922
George W. Sherman	1922-1927
Marvin M. Mell	1927-1929
Jesse P. Dice	1929-1938
Donald M. Pfeiffer	1938-1953
Vesta Ritzman (Mrs. A. R.)	1953-1962
Walter E. deBruin, Sr.	1962-1966
Frank W. Steere, Jr.	1966-1976
Allen F. Killings, D.D.S.	1976-1983
Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.)	1983-1984
Raymond R. Brown	1984-1986
C. Blake McDowell, Jr.	1986-1989
Anne Carey Green	1989-1992
Raymond R. Brown	1992-1993
Suzanne W. Pierce	1993-

Members of Board of Trustees
(1874 to present)

John R. Buchtel	1874-1877
George Tod Ford	1874-1875
J. Park Alexander	1874-
Milton W. Henry	1874-1879
Edwin P. Green	1874-1882
William T. Allen	1874-1876
William C. Allen	1876-1877
John W. Baker	1876-
David L. King	1877-1878
Paul E. Werner	1877-1882
Paul E. Werner	1883-1886
Charles A. Collins	1877-1882
Adams Emerson	1878-1880
Dr. Mason Chapman	1879-1885
Noah A. Carter	1880-1885
Rev. Thomas E. Monroe	1882-1883
Frank M. Atterholt	1882-1887
Lewis Miller	1882-1887
Charles W. Bonstedt	1882-1883
Calvin P. Humphrey	1883-1886
Calvin P. Humphrey	1899-1901
Ralph P. Burnett	1885-1894
Olin L. Sadler	1885-1894
Charles R. Grant	1886-1895
Elias Fraunfelter	1886-1892
Andrew Hale Noah	1887-1890
Charles S. Hart	1887-1890
Louis Seybold	1890-1902
Louis Dudley Seward	1890-1893
Henry K. Sauder	1892-1895
Henry K. Sauder	1898-1899
W. C. Allen	1894-1895

Erastus R. Harper	1894-1895
Wilson B. Cannon	1894-1896
John Memmer	1895-1900
H.C. Corson	1895-1898
W.T. Tobin	1895-1899
W.T. Tobin	1903-1905
Frank W. Rockwell	1895-1898
Fred C. Bryan	1896-1899
M.D. Hoynes	1898-1900
W.J. Doran	1899-1901
William T. Vaughan	1899-1916
Walter T. Flower	1900-1901
G.D. Seward	1900-1916
John C. Frank	1901-1916
George W. Rogers	1901-1903
George W. Crouse	1901-1902
J.W. Kelley	1902-1907
A.J. Tidyman	1902-1903
A.J. Mumford	1903-1907
Henry A. Kraft	1907-1913
Dr. M. V. Halter	1907-1913
Rev. George P. Atwater	1913-1938
Jesse P. Dice	1913-1938
Charles S. Lewis	1916-1920
W.W. McIntosh	1916-1920
John Gross	1916-1920
Arthur Holm	1916-1920
Harry L. Snyder	1916-1920
Hugh Allen	1917-1920
Hugh Allen	1922-1933
Marvin M. Mell	1920-1929
W. Kee Maxwell	1920-1922
George W. Sherman	1920-1927
Constance H. Legreid (Mrs. H.N.)	1920-1921
Mildred T. Abbott (Mrs. R.D.)	1920-1923
Hermine Z. Hanson (Mrs. Hans)	1921-1924
Zelle I. Taylor (Mrs. Jonathan)	1923-1944
Martha A. Chambers (Mrs. John W.)	1924-1925
Helen L. Pardee (Mrs. W.E.)	1926-1945
Gillum H. Doolittle	1927-1932

Gillum H. Doolittle	1934-1940
Augustus LaCroix	1928-1934
Dr. William Lloyd Davis	1929-1937
C. Blake McDowell, Sr.	1932-1976
Donald M. Pfeiffer	1933-1958
Halley T. Waller	1937-1945
Alfred L. Richmond	1938-1957
Howard C. Walker	1940-1953
Helen Rook	1944-1957
Chester W. Murray	1945-1961
Gertrude Kester (Mrs. W.B.)	1945-1948
Vesta Ritzman (Mrs. A.R.)	1948-1965
Walter E. deBruin, Sr.	1953-1979
Raymond R. Brown	1957-1968
Dorothea Derrig	1957-1962
Frank W. Steere, Jr.	1958-1988
Lawrence W. Radabaugh	1961-1973
Lula Smith	1962-1969
Kitty Brown	1965-1966
Natalie A. McIntyre (Mrs. Bruce H.)	1966-1967
Betty Burchett Cline	1967-1971
Allen F. Killings, D.D.S.	1968-1992
Elizabeth Ricketts (Mrs. E.M.)	1969-1993
Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.)	1971-1984
Ron G. Fisher	1973-1977
C. Blake McDowell, Jr.	1976-1994
Anne Carey Green	1977-
Raymond R. Brown	1979-1993
Marjorie Capotosto Shanahan	1984-1987
Lolita K. Adair	1987-
Suzanne M. Pierce	1988-
Gary M. Rosen	1992-
James D. Switzer	1993-
James J. Coats, CPA	1994-
Bharati A. Desai, M.D.	1994-

Appendix K

PRESIDENTS OF THE MAIN LIBRARY FRIENDS

Friends of the Libraries of Akron and Summit County:

1953-55	Robert Kyle
1955-57	Frank M. Whiteman
1957-62	Emma H. Shreffler (Mrs. James H.)
1963-65	William Worrell

On May 22, 1964, the organization was renamed Friends of the Library.

1965-67	Virginia Lusic, (Mrs. Victor)
1967-69	Kitty Brown (Mrs. Ralph S.)
1969-70	Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.)
1970-72	William Worrell
1972-76	Joann Blair (Mrs. Charles V.)

The Friends hold their first used book sale on Oct. 21, 1972 at Summit Mall.

The Friends change their name again in May, 1974 to reflect a county organization: Friends of Akron-Summit County Public Library.

1976-77	Nancy Ibsen
1977-80	Carol Miller (Mrs. John)
1980-82	Lillian Levin (Mrs. Gerald)
1982-84	Carol Miller (Mrs. John)
1984-86	Alice Phillips (Mrs. Marvin)
1986-90	Cathryn Taliaferro (Mrs. O. D.)
1990-94	Martha Bray (Mrs. William P. Jr.)
1994-	Margaret J. Dietz (Mrs. Richard H.)

Council of Friends Groups of The Akron-Summit County Public Library organize and meet for first time on July 23, 1993.

Appendix L

THANKS

Many thanks are due to those persons who assisted with this book. Dr. Robert H. Jones, retired head of the History Department at The University of Akron, graciously provided guidance and direction which were much needed; Martha Bray (Mrs. William P. Jr.), former library board member, lent her editorial skills. Frank W. Steere, Jr., provided memories and insights; John and Frances Rebenack helped with setting the record straight. Mary Ann Hoyt Bell provided the Staff Association presidents' list and Liz Hightower the information about the library cook-books. Many library staff members added their assistance when it was needed. Of particular help were Barbara Miller, Clerk-Treasurer; Olga Yogmour, Librarian-Assistant Director; and Patricia Latshaw, Community Relations Director. I am also grateful to other members of the Community Relations Department; Donna Perry, Secretary and Patricia Petrosino, Graphic Artist, who provided invaluable assistance on the production of this book and Carolyn Suddieth, Production Assistant, as well as to Mary Hazlett, Secretary II in the Administration Office. Thanks are also due to systems analyst, Eric Pardee.

Gratitude is also due the "savers": Martha Bray (Mrs. William P., Jr.) and Helen Stahler (Mrs. Gordon) who shared their files of clippings as did Joseph C. Weller. Caroline J. Pardee lent a copy of her mother's history of the library from 1834-1942. In Richfield, Virginia Baumgardner (Mrs. Ora) searched for missing pieces in the Richfield Historical Society's files while Susie Shoemaker (Mrs. Robert) and Artha Marmaduke (Mrs. Ron) of Bath provided information unavailable elsewhere. Frances B. Murphey provided dates and information from her wealth of knowledge of the library. We all benefit from the interest taken in this project by former Librarian-Director R. Russell Munn, whose records, memories and hand-written, single-spaced letters were delightful and invaluable, and from the willingness of Librarian-Director Steven Hawk to publish.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Women of the historical period dealt with for the first one hundred years of the library's existence were identified with their husbands' names - in newspapers, telephone books, and genealogies. The era of Ms. and hyphenated women's names came later in this history. In the interests of future historians, I have elected to use the style of the day with the woman's name followed by that of her husband for women involved in the first hundred years.

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Akron Public Library: A Century of Service, 1874-1974: Janis Joann Blair

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Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County: Samuel A. Lane

Knight: A Publisher in the Tumultuous Century: Charles Whited

Library Journal, September 1, 1984

Politics and the Women of Summit County, Women's History Project of the Akron Area, 1992

Akron-Summit County Public Library Board Minutes, Annual Reports, *Owlet* and *Insight*

*10/94/1000 BookCrafters, Chelsea, Michigan 48118

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